

MICK & KEITH ON 'SOME GIRLS' & THE STONES' 50TH

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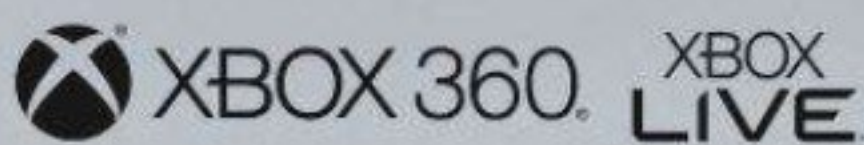
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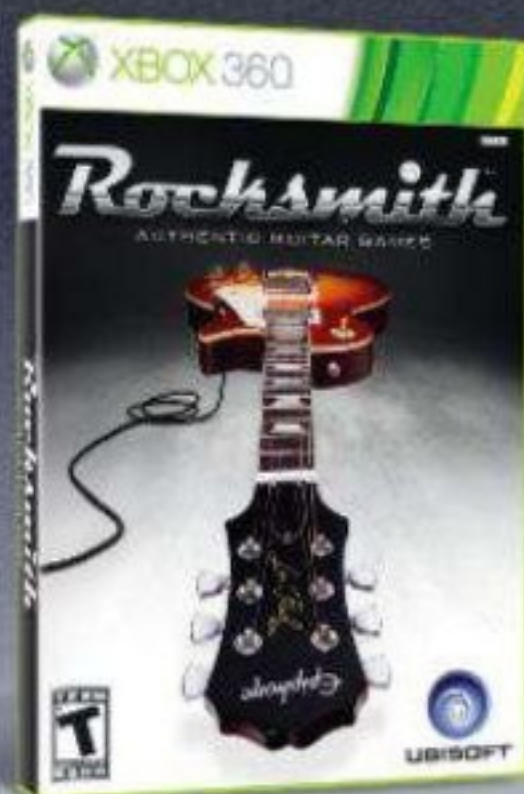


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Viva La Coldplay!

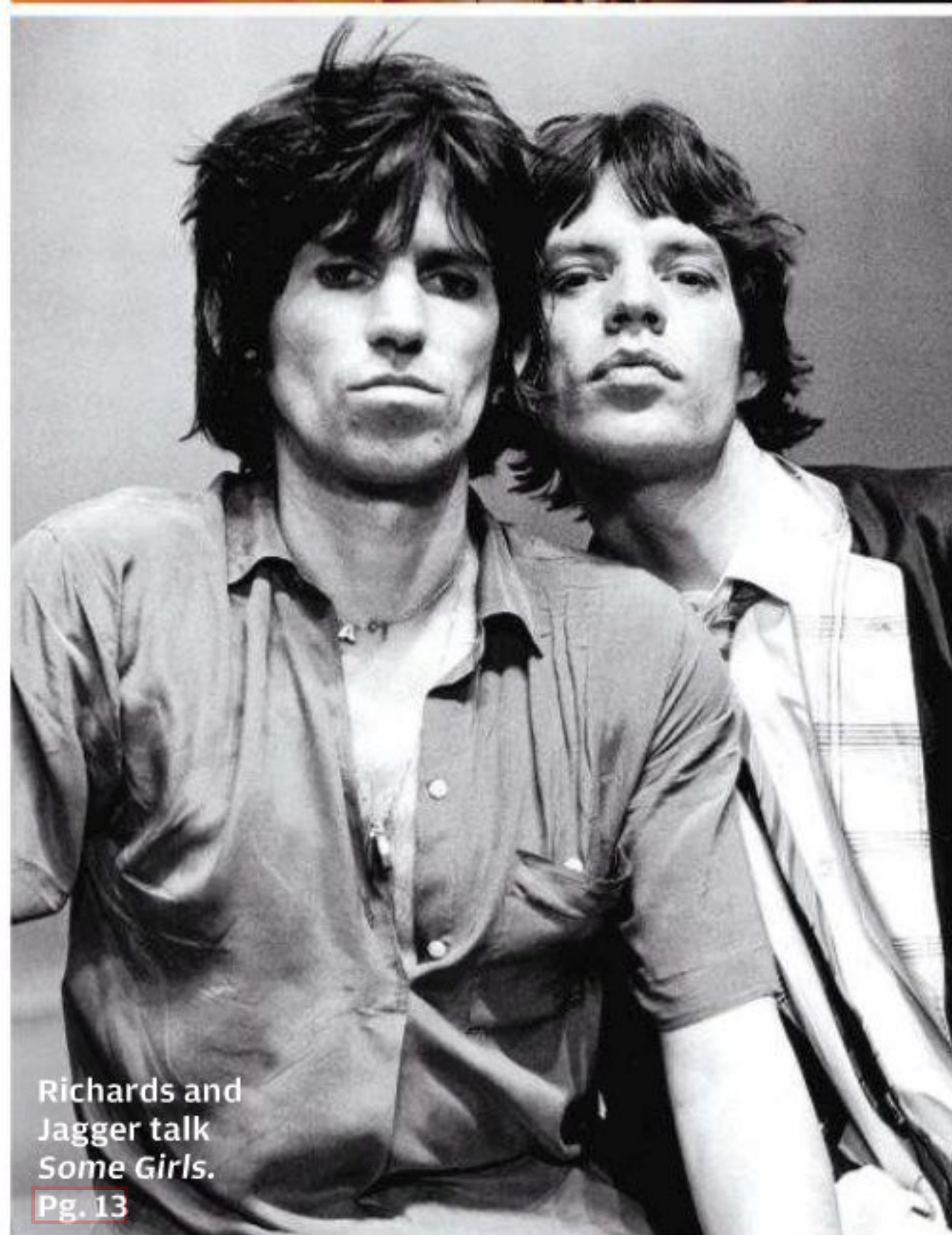
"We're very fired up," says Chris Martin, who scored the biggest rock-sales week of the year so far when Coldplay's beat-heavy, Rihanna-assisted album *Mylo Xyloto* sold 447,000 copies. "We're a bit more fearless now." The band celebrated by playing an outdoor show in Madrid, which was streamed to 19 million people worldwide.

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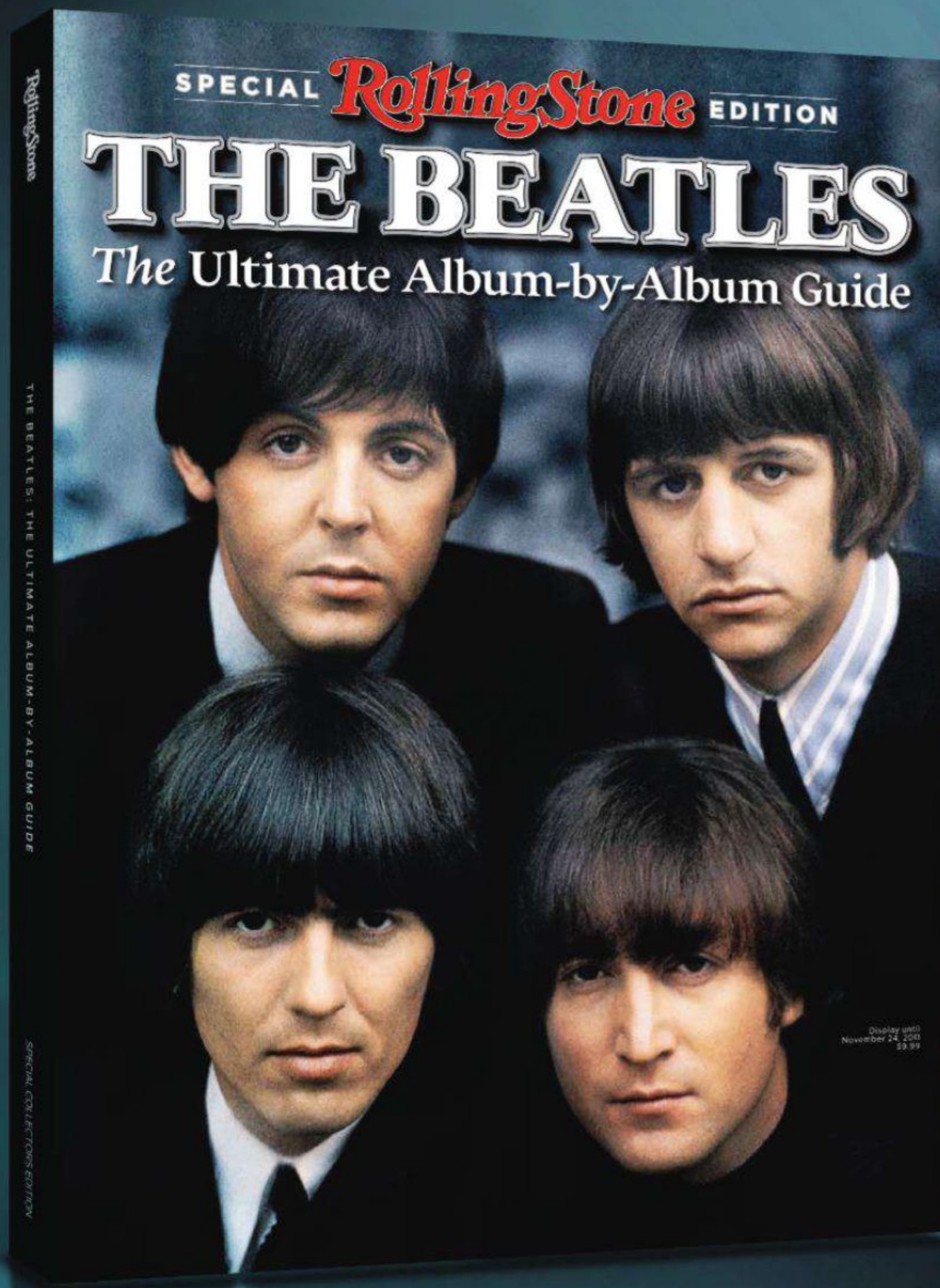
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ON THE COVER George Clooney photographed in Adelanto, California, on October 26th, 2011, by **Mark Seliger**.

Styling by Sean Spellman. Hair by Waldo Sanchez. Makeup by Julie Hewett. Set design by Kristen Vallow for Partos Company. Jacket by Banana Republic, shirt by RRL.



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Hot Music Tech

Our annual gift guide covers the best audio gear of 2011. Plus: Box sets and more.

Bring It On! Kirsten Dunst Visits RS

The *Spider-Man* actress tells RS's Peter Travers about her new movie, *Melancholia*, her childhood with Brad Pitt and, most important, how to do a real *Bring It On* cheer.



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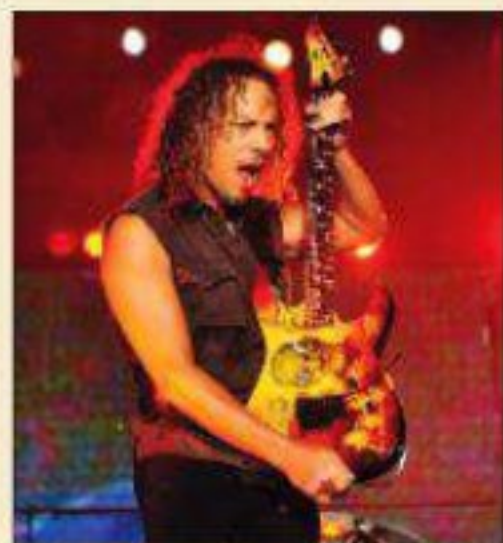
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Top 10 Metal Bands

This is where it gets ugly: Metallica or Black Sabbath? Judas Priest or Iron Maiden? Our readers rank the greatest metal acts of all time.

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Your guide to Black Friday exclusives from Red Hot Chili Peppers, Iron and Wine and more.

PREMIERE

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Only on rollingstone.com: Hear *Get Along*, the new album from Canada's best sister act.

VIDEO

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Correspondence

{ Love Letters & Advice }



Steve Jobs, RIP

JEFF GOODELL'S PIECE "THE Steve Jobs Nobody Knew" [RS 1142] is an example of why I look to ROLLING STONE for thoughtful journalism. It had terrific balance. Too often, when a well-known figure passes, there is the camp that lionizes and the camp that vilifies. Goodell walked the fine line of giving us the good and the bad. This was neither a fawning eulogy nor a scathing, posthumous potshot. Well done.

Bill McCarty, Boston

GOODELL'S PORTRAIT OF the enigmatic Jobs was a compelling read and a refreshing break from a deluge of tributes that were often little more than praise for capitalism.

Jenni Ostwinkle
Worthington, IA

SURE, HE WAS AMBITIOUS and innovated many things we enjoy today. But thank you for revealing how big of a dick Steve Jobs really was.

Andy Tsui
Columbus, OH

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OF THE MANY PIECES WRITTEN lately about Steve Jobs, Jeff Goodell's is by far the best. Jobs, who undoubtedly had no time for theater, would have appreciated a Beckett line in *Waiting for Godot*: "They give birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more."

David Steiner, Thornton, CO

LOOKING AT THE PICTURE OF a young Steve Jobs, I think Ashton Kutcher has a movie deal coming up. The likeness is uncanny.

Linda Jones, Grimsby, Ontario

WITHOUT THE GENIUS OF Jobs, we would still have to pay for music. It's ironic that you would celebrate the life of the man whose inventions made it so much harder for musicians to earn a living.

Simon Legg, Grays, England

I'VE BEEN READING YOUR magazine since 1971, and the

quality of your writing has stayed consistently high. The latest example is your profile of Jobs. I expected a hagiography of St. Steve, but instead found myself reading a revealing portrait of a complicated man. And the added point of view of Chrisann Brennan fleshed out the portrait perfectly. Keep up the good work.

Doug Brooks, Las Vegas

The 2011 Playlist

READING YOUR "2011 PLAYLIST Special" [RS 1142] reminded me why I've been a subscriber for more than 25 years. If you weren't inspired to dig deep into at least one of the playlists to learn or maybe hear something new, then you don't truly love music. With so many other artists yet to be heard from, why not take this concept and make it into a monthly feature?

Jeffrey E. Kolton
New York

I LOVED THE PLAYLIST issue, but somebody needs to tell Ke\$ha that she is trying way too hard. She sounds like somebody bragging about their first beer. We get it - you like to party.

Steve LeVine
Farmington Hills, MI

Obama's War

THANKS FOR THE GREAT ARTICLE by Michael Hastings about the Obama administration's intervention in Libya ["Inside Obama's War Room," RS 1142]. Please keep reporting on developments in the Arab world, and the American connection. And, hey, maybe the Obama presidency will turn a corner after this success.

Marco Ermacora, Montreal

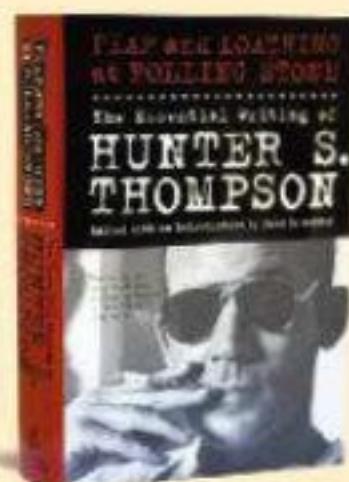
Don't Diss JT

HOLY CRAP! DID MARK FOSTER say that James Taylor [Q&A, RS 1142] is a one-hit wonder? He knows less about music than I thought. His only hit, "Pumped Up Kicks," simply combines two early-Nineties themes: Pearl Jam's "Jeremy" story line, and jealousy over someone's new Reebok Pumps.

Sean Stringfellow
Via the Internet

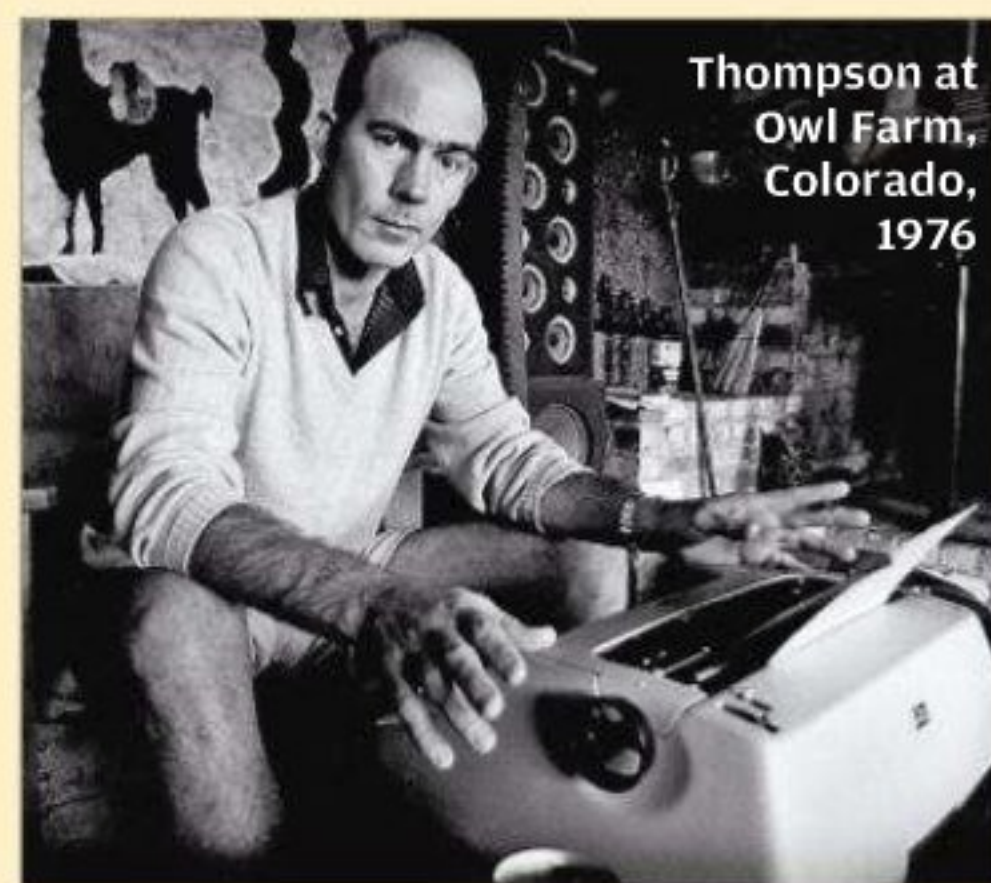
The Rolling Stone Gonzo Bible

A new book of Hunter S. Thompson's best work and private correspondence



WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE the publication of *Fear and Loathing at Rolling Stone: The Essential Writing of Hunter S. Thompson*. The collection traces the entire arc of Thompson's four-decade career at ROLLING

STONE, from his first story, 1970's "The Battle of Aspen," to "Fear & Loathing in Las Vegas," to the Nixon-McGovern campaign and to his final entry, during the 2004 election. It also features a glimpse into the sometimes agonizing and often hilarious creative process in the many, and mostly unpublished, letters between Thompson and RS founder and editor Jann S. Wenner. A sample HST note from 1971 captures the desperate energy and brilliant mania of the Vegas collaboration and the time:



Jann, Here's the rest of Vegas - minus a few graphs. ... Great rush & chaos here - cops have a bench warrant for me - Sandy is vomiting all over the house - seven dobermans underfoot, no sleep, snowing outside. Send the \$500 dollars at once. I'm down to zero.

Thanx, Hunter

Put together all in one place, the collected stories and correspondence shed new light on the life and times of the writer whom Tom Wolfe hails as "the only 20th-century equivalent of Mark Twain."

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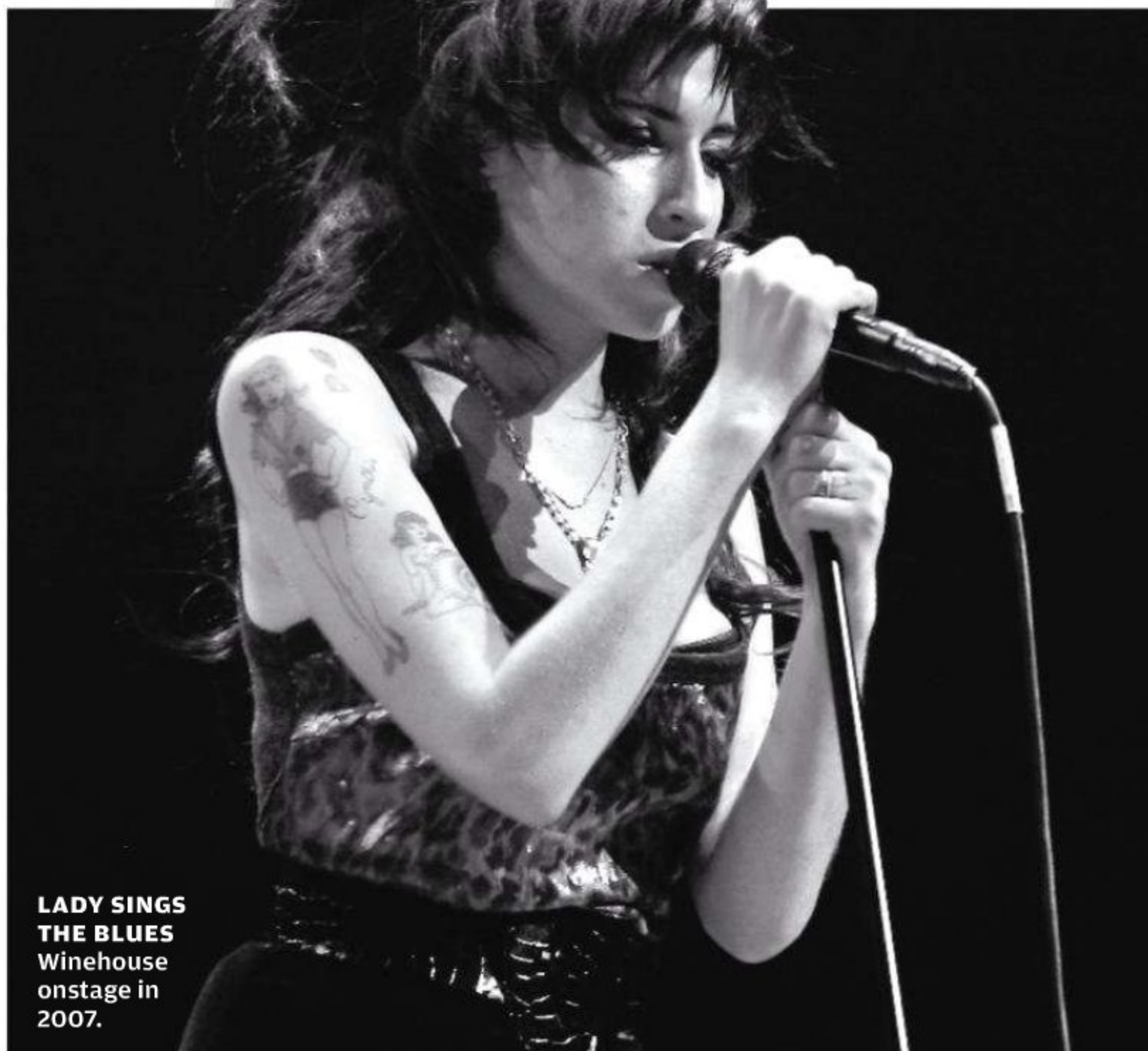
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LADY SINGS THE BLUES
Winehouse onstage in 2007.

Amy Winehouse's Last Days and Lost Music

How addiction took the singer's life, and the great new LP she left behind
By David Browne

IN THE SPRING OF 2009, Amy Winehouse and producer Salaam Remi were working in the new studio she'd built in the attic of her house in London's Camden district. Playing guitar and singing into a small hand-held mic, Winehouse unleashed a devastating version of "A Song for You," Leon Russell's pained ballad about an entertainer's regrets. As she sang, Winehouse began

to cry. "It's as if she was literally singing about herself," Remi recalls. "She was really putting herself into it."

That recording is the emotional finale of *Lioness: Hidden Treasures* (out December 6th), a career-spanning set of unreleased tracks and alternate takes compiled by Remi; Winehouse's other key producer, Mark Ronson; and her family over a few weeks in October.

News of the album came less than a week after an October 26th hearing at a coroner's court in Camden that finally determined the cause of the

singer's death. As Winehouse's parents, Mitch and Janis, sat quietly in the chapel-like courtroom, deputy coroner Suzanne Greenaway declared that Winehouse had died on July 23rd of "misadventure"—a British legal term for accidental causes. A pathologist testified that the amount of alcohol found in Winehouse's just-over-five-foot body was five times over the legal driving limit, roughly equivalent to 12 drinks.

The inquest revealed tragic new details about Winehouse's last days. According to her personal physi- **[Cont. on 14]**

Stones Go Back to 'Some Girls'

As band plots 50th anniversary, Mick and Keith finish lost tracks
By Patrick Doyle

EARLIER THIS FALL, Keith Richards spent two days at Electric Lady Studios in New York adding guitar overdubs to some unfinished tunes from the sessions for the Rolling Stones' 1978 classic, *Some Girls*. "It was a time trip," Richards says. "You're immediately transported back to Paris in 1977." What does he see back there? "A couple of bitches that I'd forgotten about," he says with a cackle. "Stuff like that."

The *Some Girls* reissue—due November 21st and packed with extras including 12 previously unreleased tracks—was a time trip for the entire band, sending it back to a period when Richards was awaiting trial for heroin possession, Mick Jagger was hitting the New York club scene hard, and the Stones were forced to confront changing times. "We were getting a certain kick up the ass from the punks," says Richards. "Not that **[Cont. on 16]**"



AMY WINEHOUSE

[Cont. from 13] cian, Cristina Romete, Winehouse had been sober for most of July but resumed drinking on July 20th. Romete last met with Winehouse at 7 p.m. the night before she died. "She was calm, she was coherent," Romete recalled. "She was tipsy, I would say, but she didn't slur her words and was able to hold a full conversation." Although Winehouse had seen a psychologist, Romete testified that Winehouse "was opposed to any sort of therapy.... She had her own views and was very determined to do everything her own way."

One reason Winehouse had tried to stop drinking was a cat-

confirm his daughter's name and address. Later, the family issued a statement: "It is some relief to finally find out what happened to Amy. We understand there was alcohol in her system when she passed away - it is likely a buildup of alcohol in her system over a number of days. The court heard that Amy was battling hard to conquer her problems with alcohol and it is a source of great pain to us that she could not win in time."

Due to her struggles with drugs and alcohol, Winehouse had finished only two songs for the planned follow-up to *Back to Black*, though she left behind many more incomplete tracks over

have to leave the room after a couple of songs," Remi says. "He was expecting to hear a train wreck. Same with her label. But when they listened, they said, 'Hold on, something is happening here.'"

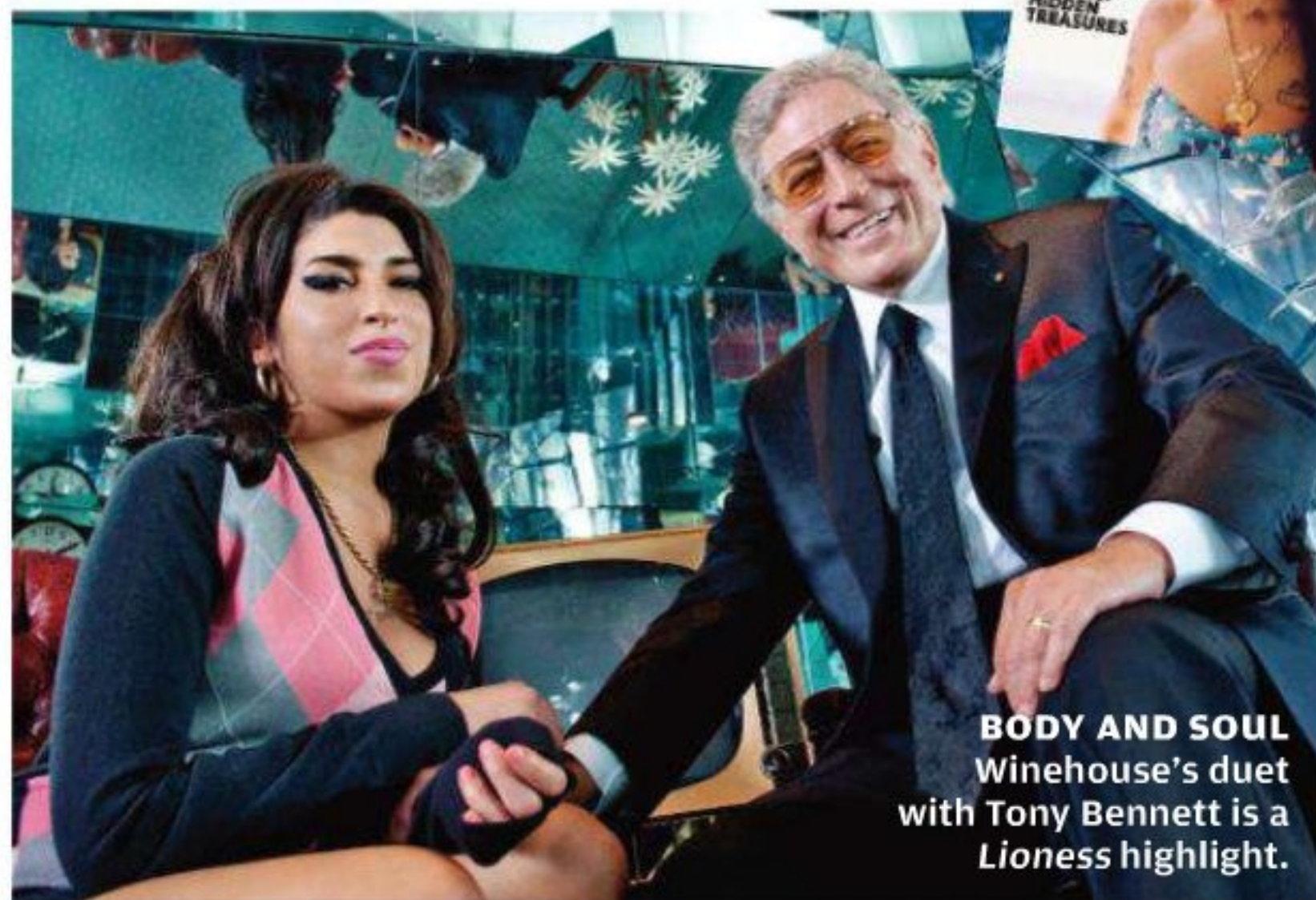
Indeed, the album is surprisingly cohesive, polished with background vocals and strings added after her death. An 18-year-old Winehouse displays her early command of slippery, jazz-derived phrasing on the bossa nova classic "The Girl From Ipanema," from 2002. Other highlights

include a midtempo early take of *Back to Black*'s "Tears Dry," a 2004 version of the Brill Building standard "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow," and a reggae overhaul of Ruby and the Romantics' "Our Day Will Come" that reveals Winehouse's debt to Lauryn Hill. Since Winehouse had talked of cutting a jazz album with Roots drummer Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, he was called in to add a drum part to the *Frank* outtake "Halftime."

The disc also includes Winehouse's last known recording, a duet with Tony Bennett on the jazz standard "Body and Soul," cut in London last March. "She got right into the jazz groove, and the record came out beautiful," Bennett says. "I wanted to talk her out of the drugs, but I never had a chance."

A few days before she died, Winehouse chatted with Remi via Skype, making plans to attend the wedding of Winehouse's former manager Nick Shymansky. "She was really excited," he says. "It was all jokes and talking about what she was going to wear."

Remi never saw her again. "Some kid will pick up an Amy album and say, 'This is really inspiring,' the way she looked up to people like Billie Holiday," he says. "She was inspired by people who passed away before she was born, and she will inspire people who weren't born yet." 25



BODY AND SOUL
Winehouse's duet
with Tony Bennett is a
Lioness highlight.

astrophic show in Belgrade on June 18th. During the first date of a planned European tour, the singer slurred her words, forgot lyrics and eventually slumped, crying, to the stage. "Amy felt she had let everyone down in Serbia and was very sorry about it," says a source close to the Winehouse family. "It brought about a period of abstinence from alcohol."

Her live-in security guard, Andrew Morris, confirmed that on the night of her death, Winehouse was listening to music and watching TV at home. He checked on her at 2 a.m., when he went to bed, and again at 10 a.m. and found her still asleep. But at 3 p.m., Winehouse wasn't breathing. Paramedics were called to the scene, where they declared the singer dead. Three empty vodka bottles were found in her room.

During the hearing, Mitch Winehouse spoke only once, to

"Amy felt she had let everyone down" at her catastrophic last show, says a source.

the years. On *Lioness*, those two tunes reveal the direction Winehouse was headed musically. Recorded in 2008, the doo-wop harmonies on "Between the Cheats," about her then-husband, Blake Fielder-Civil, refine her blend of retro and modern pop. "Like Smoke" features her close friend Nas, who added his verses after Winehouse's death, rapping, "Why did God take away the homey?" and "I'm a firm believer that we all meet up in eternity."

When the album was first being assembled, expectations from Winehouse's label, Universal, and family were low. "Mitch first said to me, 'I might

IN THE NEWS

Roger Waters plans 2012 stadium run

After performing **Pink Floyd's** *The Wall* in full around the world for the past two years, Waters will bring the spectacle back to North America for 36 more dates - including stops at Chicago's Wrigley Field and San Francisco's AT&T Park - kicking off May 1st in Houston. "The response in Australia and South America has been quite extraordinary," says Waters. "It just gets better and better."



Waters

Mayer, Adele on rest after throat surgery

John Mayer is on "complete vocal rest for a month or more," after an October 20th operation to remove a granuloma above his vocal



Mayer

cord. "I have this beautiful, meaningful record waiting for me when I can sing it," Mayer wrote on his website. Also recovering: Adele, who had surgery for a vocal-cord hemorrhage and canceled all appearances for the rest of the year. "I will be back and I'm gonna smash the ball out of the park once I'm touring again," the singer promised.

Music sales up in 2011

After years of tanking sales, the record biz finally got some good news in late October: 249.29 million albums have been sold so far in 2011 - up three percent over last year. Monster sales for **Adele's** 21 (4 million and counting) helped boost a 23-week streak of improved year-to-date numbers.

Trey Anastasio, Ad-Rock hit the theater

The **Phish** guitarist has wrapped work on *Hands on a Hardbody*, a musical based on the 1997 documentary about an extreme endurance contest, which will debut next spring in La Jolla, California. "Writing for singers other than myself has been extremely liberating," says Anastasio, who teamed with Pulitzer Prize winner **Doug Wright** for the project. In other news, **Beastie Boy Adam Horowitz** created "original sound" for his father Israel's new off-Broadway show, *Gloucester Blue*.



Anastasio

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MIDNIGHT IN PARIS
Bill Wyman, Watts, Jagger,
Wood and Richards at
Pathé Marconi studios



'SOME GIRLS'

[Cont. from 13] I'm a really big punk fan, but their energy, and the fact that you realize another generation was coming up on top of you, was a kick up the ass. It felt time to get down to the nuts and bolts of it and not play around with glamorous female voices and horns and stuff."

"There was a lot of good genre-mashing going on before it all got a bit too separate," adds Jagger, who was soaking up everything from the Clash to dance music at the time. "You had the end of punk and the beginnings of hip-hop – that kind of semi-rap thing, which you get a bit if you listen to 'Miss You' and 'Shattered.'"

Beginning in October 1977, the band hunkered down at a live rehearsal space in Paris' Pathé Marconi studios and jammed for months on end. "Everybody was exploding with riffs," says Ronnie Wood. "The motto was 'More fast numbers.'" They churned out their most eclectic album ever, ranging from after-hours disco glitter ("Miss You") to speedy punk ("When the Whip Comes Down") and soulful ballads showing off Richards and Wood's newfound guitar-weaving majesty ("Beast of Burden" and "Just My Imagination").

With producer Don Was (who helmed last year's *Exile on Main St.* reissue), the Stones returned to *Some Girls* earlier this year, scouring hundreds of hours of tapes from the original sessions, using long-circulated bootlegs as a guide

to highlights like "Claudine," a stripped-down boogie about French singer Claudine Longet, accused of murdering her boyfriend, ski racer Spider Sabich, in 1976, and "Tallahassee Lassie," a raucous Chuck Berry-style number cut during a stop on the *Some Girls* tour.

At Electric Lady, Richards recorded new acoustic- and electric-guitar parts to several tracks, even playing piano on the riff rocker "Love You Too Much." "You don't want to fuck around too much with new ideas," says Richards. "You've really got to control yourself and go, 'This is 1977.'"

Jagger has a different philosophy. "The tracks could be done, like, last week, as far as I'm concerned," he says. The singer added vocals to some of the lost tunes at his home in France and elsewhere, including the country-tinged "Do You Think I Really Care" and the band's boozy

run through Hank Williams' "You Win Again." "Thirty-five years later, Mick could punch in an existing vocal," says Was. "Nobody can do that."

But some tapes were best left untouched, like Richards' mesmerizing take on the country tune "We Had It All" – a vulnerable performance he gave as he

"We were getting a certain kick up the ass from the punks," says Richards.

struggled to stay clean and his relationship with Anita Pallenberg crumbled. Says Richards, "We looked at that one and said, 'It is what it is.'"


In fact, Richards was hesitant at first to go back to the vaults at all. "[*Exile*] was a one-off at the time," he says. "But you listen to *Some Girls* and

realize there's a lot of stuff to play with. I got into it." And Richards had one other key motive for taking on the project: "It's also another one of my secret attempts to try and pull these guys back together."

So this month, Richards will meet Wood and drummer Charlie Watts in a London studio. "We're just going to play a little together, because we haven't played for three or four years," Richards says. "You don't necessarily want to rehearse or write anything – you just want to touch bases. That's a good start: me, Charlie and Ronnie. Mick's welcome, and I'm sure he'll turn up, but right now we just want to get our chops down."

Beyond that, the Stones' plans for their 50th anniversary next year remain unclear. "I just hope we can perform live," says Wood. "It'd be great to see if that old spark is there."

For now, the closest fans will get is the stellar *Some Girls Live in Texas* DVD (part of the deluxe reissue and sold separately) – shot on a hot night in Fort Worth during the Stones' brief summer 1978 tour. "As soon as I heard about the DVD, I thought we must have toured with that album," says Wood. "We were just so high."

The *Some Girls* and *Exile* reissues might only be the beginning: Was wants to tackle *Beggars Banquet*, *Let It Bleed* or *Sticky Fingers* soon. "There's so much material," he says. "If they never went in the studio again, you could have a new Stones album every year for the next 50 years, and it would all be good." 

Track by Track: 'Some Girls' Revisited

The Stones finally released a dozen lost late-1970s cuts. Here are the best:

No Spare Parts

This heart-breaking ballad showcases Jagger's twangy vocals and a new pedal steel track from Ronnie Wood. "We did one or two run-throughs, and we had it," says Wood. "It all came flooding back."

You Win Again

"On that one, we're just having a damn good time," Richards says of this Hank Williams cover. But Jagger didn't want more country songs on the original LP besides "Far Away Eyes": "It would have been very heavily country."

So Young

This scorching diary of jailbait lust was recorded in Paris for *Some Girls*, but not released until 1994 as a Voodoo Lounge-era B side. "That is pretty hard to get now," says Jagger – so they went back and remixed it for the reissue.

Tallahassee Lassie

Cut in L.A. during the *Some Girls* tour, this rockabilly gem features a surprise guest: John Fogerty, who added hand claps after having dinner with Jagger recently. Says Was, "John was just grinning from ear to ear."

Keep Up Blues

This stomping, harp-soaked barnburner with ultracocksy Jagger vocals is the Stones at their rootsy best. "This project reinjected some energy into the band," says Wood, "and reminded us what a kicking live band we are."

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A black and white photograph of a man's head and shoulders in profile, facing right. He has dark, wavy hair and is wearing a dark, high-collared garment. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The lighting is soft, highlighting the contours of his face and hair.

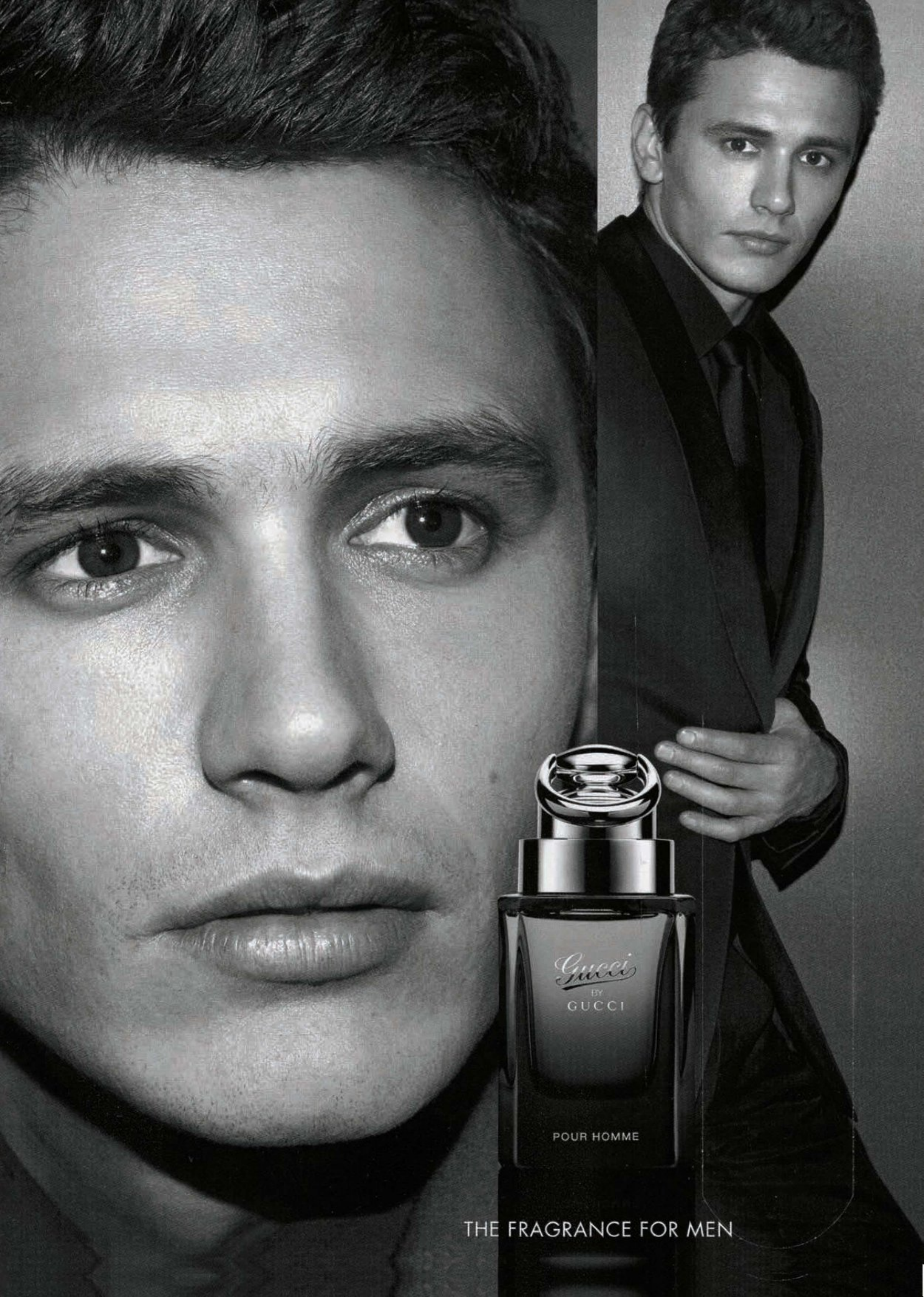
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Rock Radio Takes Another Hit

Radio chains slash jobs, as local DJs are replaced with syndicated talent

CONTINUING RADIO'S shift away from local programming in favor of centralized playlists and nationally syndicated shows, two of America's biggest radio chains laid off dozens of DJs and programmers at stations from Albuquerque to Toledo in recent weeks. Clear Channel Communications, which owns 850 stations nationwide, cut hundreds of jobs in late October, and rival radio company Cumulus cut almost 30, including legendary L.A. rock DJ Jim Ladd – the inspiration behind Tom Petty's scathing 2002 hit "The Last DJ," which pilloried the homogenization of playlists in the Clear Channel era. "It's really bad news," says Ladd. "It was people in my profession that first played Tom Petty, first played the Doors. But the people programming stations [now] are not music people – they're business people."

"How are people going to find out about new acts?" asks a top manager.

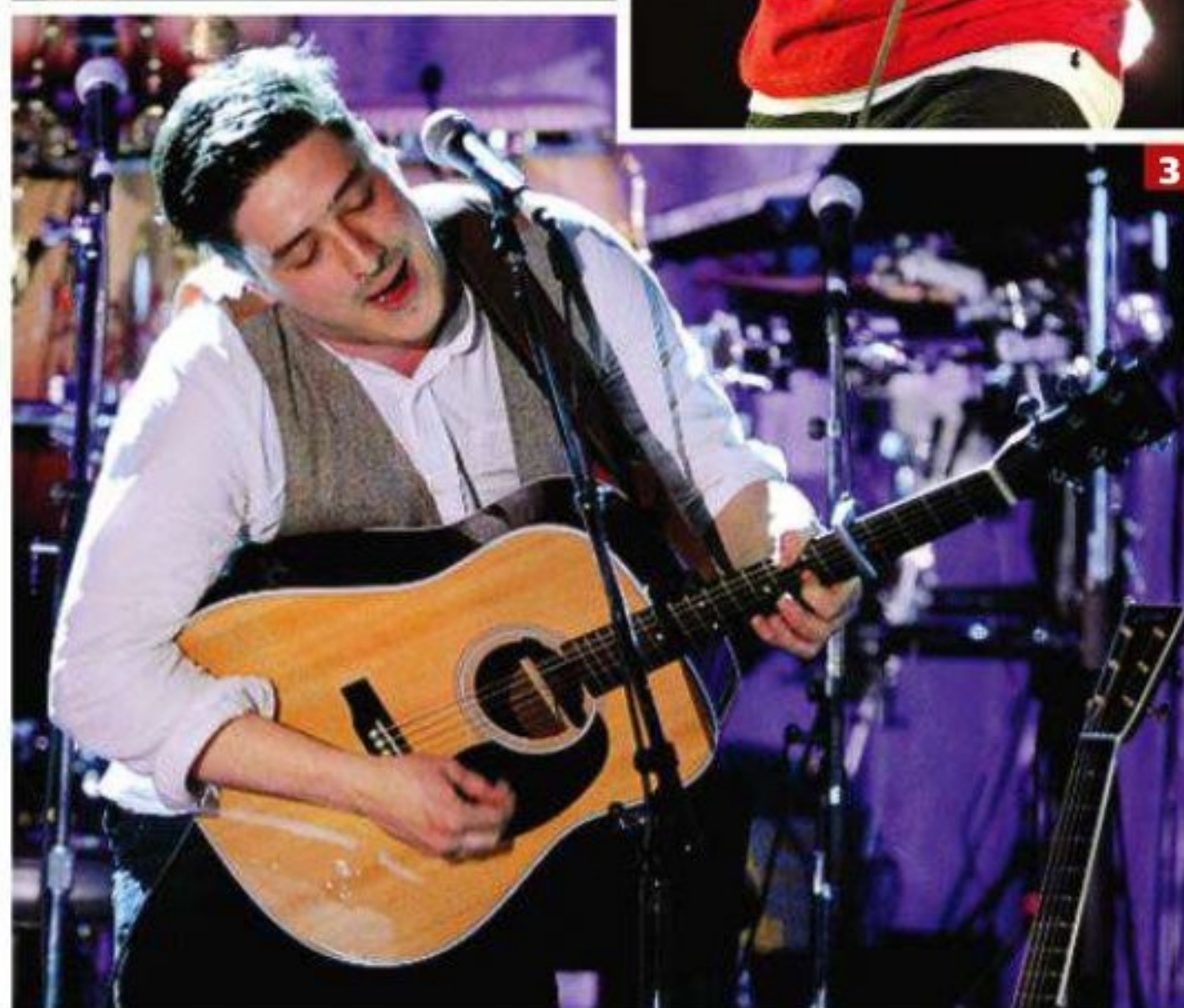
"It's a decrease in expense for the company, but the dirty little secret is it's going to be less local – it just is," adds Tony Florentino, who was laid off as program director for two Clear Channel pop stations in Columbus, Ohio, in September. "That's ultimately not good for listeners in those markets."

For rock stations – which have struggled in recent years – the blow was especially hard. So what will take the place of shows helmed by local DJs? Expect to hear more übersyndicated personalities like Ryan Seacrest and Steve Harvey, and *The Big D and Bubba Show*. "This is not about DJs, this is about effectiveness, efficiency and giving our listeners what they want," says Clear Channel spokeswoman Wendy Goldberg. Adds Skip Bishop, senior VP of promotion for Sony Music

Nashville, "They're just exploiting their most successful talents. I don't think their purpose is redefining radio, but that's the end result."

Two influential modern rock stations, New York's WRXP and Chicago's Q101, switched formats over the summer, leaving those markets without a single major outlet to break new rock acts. A Number One rock hit reaches just 13 million listeners, compared to 138 million

records that get the biggest audience now, it's through the combination of pop radio and TV exposure," says Jim McGuinn, program director for the Current, the Minneapolis public-radio rock station that helped break Mumford & Sons. In the end, radio's cutbacks



Radio Daze

Influential L.A. DJ Ladd – who inspired Petty's "The Last DJ" – lost his job (1). Top acts from the Chili Peppers (2) to Mumford (3) can't count on rock radio to break singles anymore.

for a Number One Top 40 hit – a gap that has widened dramatically since 2006, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Even proven hitmakers, from the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Coldplay, just don't get enough spins on the limited number of stations left to rely on rock radio to break a single. "A lot of the

and strategy shifts are just more bad news for a record industry still reeling from tanking sales. And while rock continues to rule the concert business, radio support has always been required to grow a band's audience from the hardcore fans who go to club shows to the more mainstream masses needed to fill arenas and amphitheaters.

"Some of the biggest rock markets in the country have no rock radio," says Bob McLynn, manager of acts like Gym Class Heroes, Train, Hole and Fall Out Boy. "How are people going to find new acts in a lot of these markets?" **STEVE KNOPPER**

CHECKING IN

Scott Weiland

On the least likely holiday LP of the year and STP's tour trouble

Who knew that rock's biggest Christmas guy might just be Scott Weiland? The Stone Temple Pilots frontman was thrilled at the opportunity to put his unique spin on holiday standards, from "Winter Wonderland" to "White Christmas," on his new LP, *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*. "My memories of Christmas are very special, especially as a youngster," he says. "These songs have been done and redone by so many different people – yet



people love to listen to them every holiday season."

REGGAE CHRISTMAS Most of the versions on *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year* stick to familiar arrangements, but a few are more daring. "We wanted to do a reggae-ish 'Silent Night,'" says Weiland. "There's a sort of swinging version of 'What Child Is This?' and we have a bossa-nova Sixties-kitschy version of another song. It all worked out quite amazing."

PILOT DOWN STP's latest U.S. tour was postponed in September due to Weiland's throat problems. "My voice was shot," says the singer. "I've been on the road non-stop ever since I got in with Velvet Revolver. Finally, a specialist put a camera down my throat. One of my vocal cords was strong, but the other one was very weak. He was afraid that I was going to do irreparable harm."

CHILL WINTER Weiland has a brief solo tour lined up behind the Christmas disc, but after that, he's looking forward to taking some rare downtime. Says the singer, "I want to spend time with my kids, and I want to have a personal life." **ANDY GREENE**

Jay-Z and Kanye Rock Mics, Arenas

The rap titans launch the most ambitious hip-hop tour of all time

ON OPPOSITE ENDS OF the arena, perched on towering, video-panel-studded platforms, Jay-Z and Kanye West face off like gladiators waiting for the action to begin. Then it does: Lasers fire across the crowd, and the monster PA surges to life with thunderclap kick drums, subsonic

PERFORMANCE

1st Mariner Arena,
November 1st, Baltimore

bass lines and spastic high-hats. It's the first *Watch the Throne* single, "H.A.M." – and it's way more impressive live than it was on the radio, shaking Baltimore's 1st Mariner Arena as the rap titans begin trading furious competitive verses.

"I've never been to a hip-hop show that was so much of a party, ever," says Pusha T, whom West recently signed to his G.O.O.D. Music label. "Back-to-back ridiculousness. No dancers, no band, no opening act, no guests – I'm talking about bare-bones rap. It is the most arrogant show that I've ever seen in my life."



TWO KINGS
Kanye and Jay-Z
in Baltimore

Back in 2001, Jay gave Kanye his biggest break, making the then-obscure producer's beats the centerpiece of his classic LP *The Blueprint*. Since then, the pair have boosted each other's careers countless times – Jay kicking key guest verses on Kanye tracks including "Diamonds (Remix)"; 'Ye cooking up radio-dominating beats for Jigga tunes like "Run This Town."

Both tracks were broken out during the 37-song, two-hour-plus set – which seemed to mir-

ror their relationship, the pair going hit-for-hit all night. But it also spotlighted key differences: Faced with big brother Jay-Z's unmatched confidence and charisma, Kanye dug deeper into the core of what makes *him* great, becoming a ball of manic energy and pure creativity. During the "Try a Little Tenderness"-sampling *Throne* single "Otis," the MCs met on the main stage to pal around, slapping each other's backs in front of an enormous American flag.

It's hard to overstate just how many all-time lose-your-shit jams these guys have – it's like the hip-hop version of, say, U2 and the E Street Band sharing the stage on the greatest tour of all time ("Rosalita" into 'Where the Streets Have No Name' was *sick, bro!*").

Kanye blasted through "Flashing Lights" and "Jesus Walks"; Jay returned for "Diamonds" – which segued into the Brooklyn MC's own "PSA." When Jay launched into the 1998 smash "Hard Knock Life," 'Ye stuck around just to dance and point, more homeboy than hypeman. Later, when Kanye ripped through 2005's "Touch the Sky," Jay returned the favor.

After running through "Gold Digger," "Big Pimpin'" and "99 Problems," the duo hit the encore – including, audaciously, the night's *third* run through the current single "Ni**as in Paris." Then, with the entire arena rapping along, the night ended, inevitably, with the Kanye-produced Jigga classic "Encore."

"Baltimore blew every city off the map thus far," Jay said at the end, which was nice to hear even though it was only the *Watch the Throne* tour's third stop. (Sorry, Atlanta and Greensboro!) "It's not even close."

EVAN SERPICK

Wait, How Much Does 'Free' Really Cost?

Fascinating new book looks at copyright law and piracy in a new light

THE TYPICAL DEATH-of-the-music-business story goes like this: In 1999, tiny tech upstart Napster freed MP3s and clobbered

BOOKSHELF

Free Ride
Robert Levine
Doubleday

greedy record labels before getting shut down for copyright infringement. Then iTunes and YouTube – not to mention an army of bloggers gleefully post-

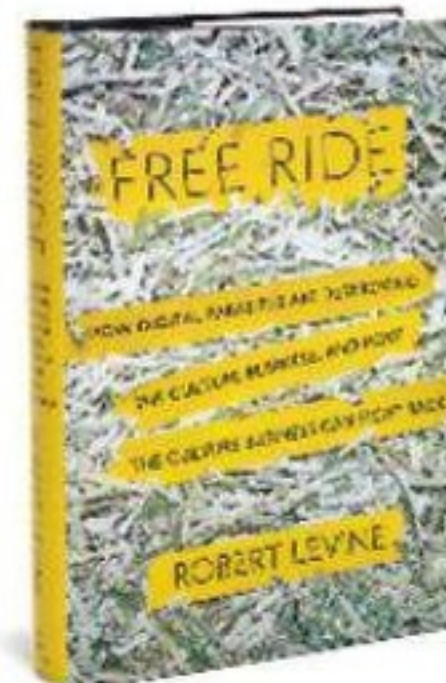
ing leaks by the next big indie bands – filled the Napster void, and everyone was happy.

But what if the digital revolution has actually hurt artists and fans in the long run? In *Free Ride: How Digital Parasites Are Destroying the Culture Business, and How the Culture Business Can Fight Back*, long-time ROLLING STONE contributor Robert Levine argues that record labels – as well as other old-school media businesses like Hollywood studios and newspapers – need stronger copyright protection against online piracy. Why should you care? For one thing, if labels lose their incentive to pump money into developing bands,

where will the stars of tomorrow come from? "Most iconic bands took a few albums to get going," Levine says.

"In the new system, you'll have people making a couple albums in their twenties and then saying, 'OK, that was cool, now I'm going to get a job.' That's a shame."


As labels continue to shed revenue, tech giants like Apple and Google are booming – aided, either directly or indirectly, by piracy – and are lobbying Washington for even looser copyright laws. *Free*



Ride points out that in 2010, Google pumped more than \$5 million into lobbying, and

it donates heavily to the Internet free-speech organization Creative Commons, co-founded by law scholar and geek hero Lawrence Lessig. "It seems like we've traded one set of giant companies for another," says Levine. "At what point did free music become a social cause? If artists want to give away their music, that's great. They just shouldn't have to do it when they don't want to."

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IN THE STUDIO

The Roots' Heavy Rhyme Experience

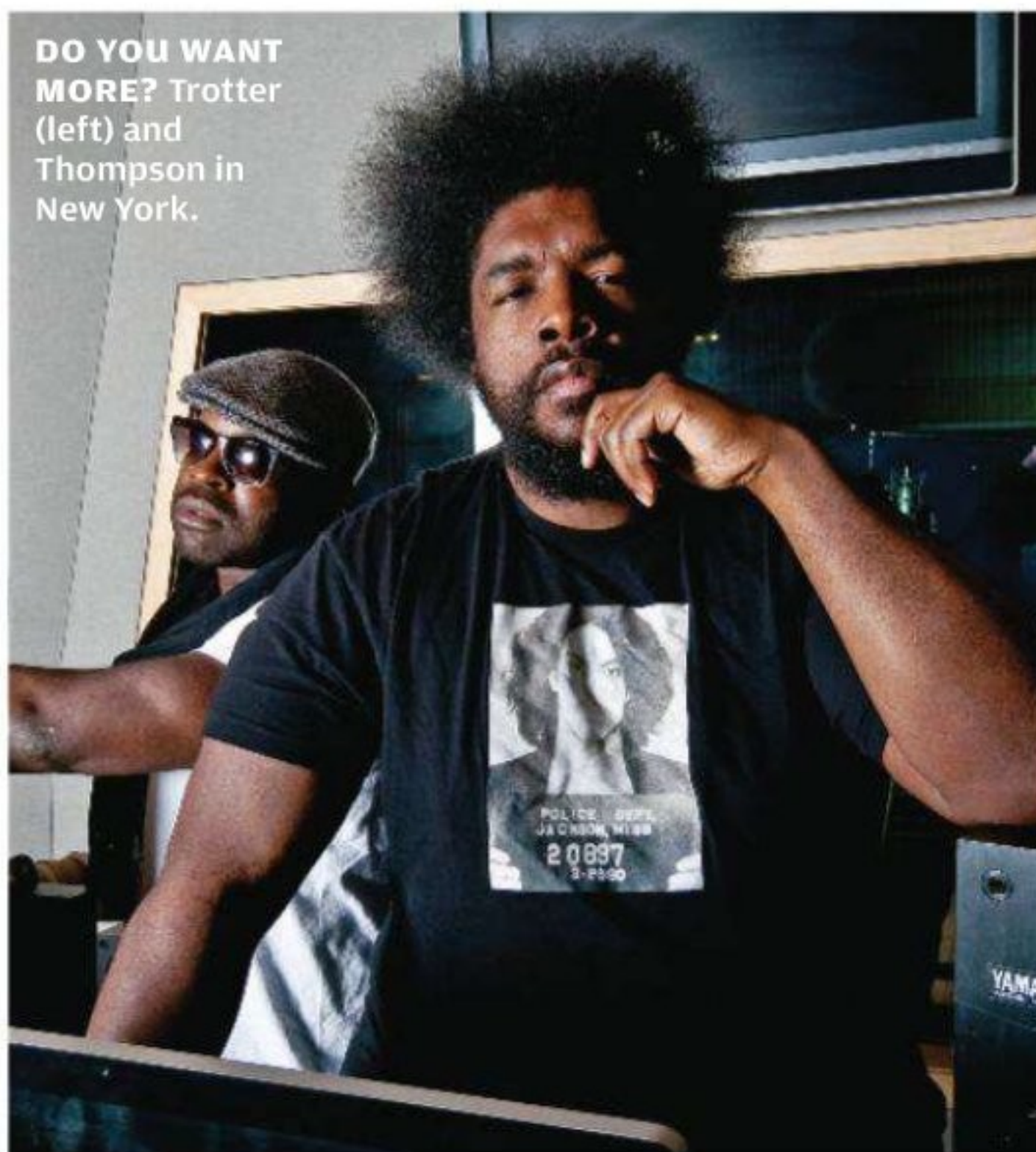
Album undun
Due Out December 6th

THE STRING QUARTET have gone through at least a dozen takes by the time Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson arrives at the Soho studio where the Roots are recording final overdubs for their 11th album. Standing still in the center of the room, the drummer-producer listens closely as an engineer cues up the sweeping, mournful chamber-music suite that will close the disc. He keeps a poker face until it's over, then grins and delivers his verdict: “Awesome.”

When the Roots were hired as *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon's* house band in 2009, few would have blamed them for taking it easy after 14 years on the road. Instead, the *Fallon* gig has coincided with an unlikely spike in productivity: Their pitch-dark new concept album, *undun* (due out December 6th), is their third full-length LP in just 18 months. “I don’t want to jinx it,” Thompson says, relaxing in the studio after the string section clears out. “But I feel like this is our most realized work.”

To the Roots’ surprise, the *Fallon* gig has given the eight-man band tons of downtime to generate grooves and riffs in a studio space NBC provides them in 30 Rockefeller Center.

DO YOU WANT MORE? Trotter (left) and Thompson in New York.



“On average, we’ll create between three and 11 songs every day,” Thompson says.

About a year ago, Thompson and rapper Tariq Trotter (a.k.a. Black Thought) began fitting the best material from those sessions into a story line about a character named Redford Stephens, shot dead at age 25. Stephens is fictional, but his struggle feels authentic – in part because Trotter, who lost both parents to violence by 18, drew on real-life sorrows. “Redford’s

story isn’t uncommon in Philadelphia,” the MC says a few days later, while a barber gives him a last-minute shape-up backstage at *Late Night*. “I remember not being able to imagine being alive as a 30-year-old. I didn’t know many people who had lived to 30.”

In fact, Thompson and Trotter, who formed the band in high school, both turned 40 this year. Now 25 years into their creative partnership, the pair lead thoroughly distinct lives

outside of their day job – even recording much of *undun* at separate sessions. “He has his shit that he likes in the studio, and so do I – totally different sights and sounds and aromas, different engineers,” Trotter says. “I found myself in the studio with Ahmir last Sunday, and it was weird. ‘What are we both doing here right now?’ But accepting what works is what has kept the Roots together.”

At the studio, Thompson calls up a rough mix of the LP. Dissonant pianos, hard-knock drums, choral arrangements and urgent verses spill from the monitors, creating a paranoid funk vibe somewhere between *There’s a Riot Goin’ On* and *Kid A*. The bleak, experimental disc would be a gamble for most bands, but the Roots – who can count on a steady paycheck from NBC and a hands-off attitude from label Def Jam – are in a unique position. “If our only job were being the Roots,” Thompson says, “I don’t know if we would be bold enough to make this record.”

Now they just have to figure out how to bring *undun* to the stage. “The real challenge will be, are our balls big enough to deliver this with a straight face?” says Thompson, citing recent Radiohead and Portishead shows as inspiration. “That’s what I’m thinking about now.” **SIMON VOZICK-LEVINSON**

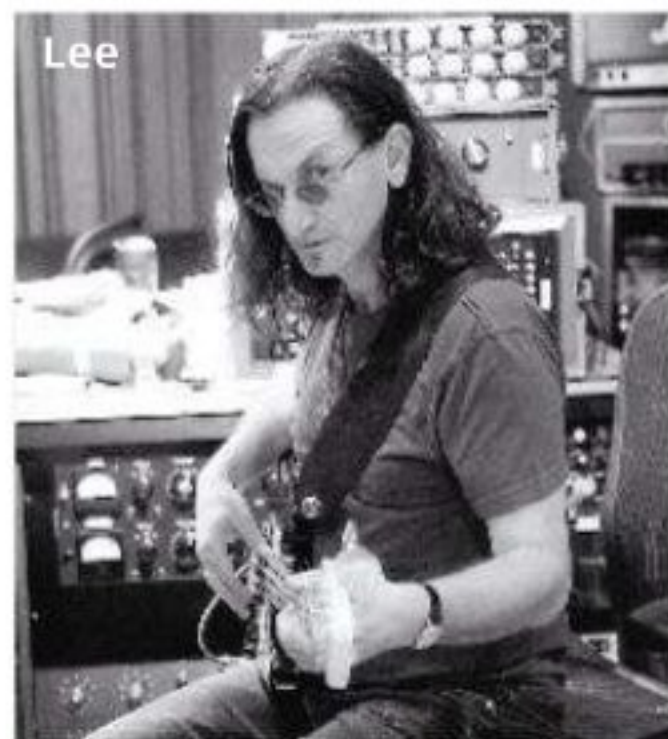
Rush Roar Back Into the Limelight With New LP

Album Clockwork Angels
Due Out 2012

RUSH SPENT THE PAST two years looking back – performing their 1981 classic *Moving Pictures* in its entirety. But at the same time, the Canadian prog heroes started cranking on their 20th LP, *Clockwork Angels*. “We’re almost finished writing,” says

frontman Geddy Lee. “Hopefully we’ll have all of the recording done before Christmas.”

Last year, Rush tested the waters, releasing two tracks from the album – the Metallica-ish riff monsters “Caravan” and “BU2B” – and playing them on tour. “We figured we had nothing to lose,” says Lee. “It was a lot of fun for the fans, and fun for us.” The disc is shaping up to be the trio’s heaviest in decades.



Says Lee, “The two tracks we released point in the direction we’re going.”

Rush haven’t scored a Top 40 hit since 1982’s “New World

Man,” but they’ve maintained one of rock’s biggest cult audiences. And last year’s acclaimed documentary *Rush: Beyond the Lighted Stage* helped make them more popular than ever. “We feel invigorated,” says Lee. “I think we’ve come to a point in our lives where we’re playing the best we’ve ever played as a live band.”

“You don’t know how long that’s going to go,” he adds. “Rock & roll does have its limits as far as the aging process. You want to go out there and play while you’re at your peak.” **ANDY GREENE**

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FEEL GOOD INC.
Albarn with
Congolese
musicians in
Kinshasa

Kinshasa Calling: Congolese Bands Jam With Damon Albarn

The Brit-pop king crafts a cross-cultural LP in one of Africa's poorest cities

ON DAMON ALBARN'S fifth day in Africa, things were looking up. The Gorillaz and Blur leader was in downtown Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, spearheading an ambitious weeklong collaboration between Congolese musicians and English and American producers. As he sat at the mixing board listening to a group of Batwa pygmies singing about their forest home, Albarn nodded his head exuberantly. "All right!" he shouted over the din. "It's starting to come together!" And then, as if on cue, the power went out. "Oh, for fuck's sake," he said, smiling despite himself. "We're trying to make a record!"

Just another day at work in Congo. Resource-wise, the central-Africa nation is one of the richest on Earth, with a staggering \$24 trillion in estimated mineral wealth. But thanks to a heartbreaking history of colonial oppression, homegrown dictatorship and a bloody civil war that took more than 5 million lives, Congo's citizens remain some of the poorest in the world.

But listen to the country's music, and you'd almost never

know it. Congolese music is a joyous, spirited affair, emanating from seemingly every corner and overcrowded apartment. In the six days that DRC Music, as the collective dubbed itself, spent in Kinshasa, it saw instruments made of everything from rusty coffee cans to oversize gourds to the kind of industrial tubing you'd find in the back of a washing machine. One percussionist had nothing but a plastic bag full of beans; another boasted an impressive

"Musicians sweating together, learning together," Albarn says, "that's real."

junk-heap drum kit with an oscillating fan cover for the snare. "It took me two hours to make," the drummer, Cuba, said. "I've been playing it for 10 years."

Albarn's idea going in was simple: "We wanted to get these different cultures together and just see what we could create." The goal was to make an entire record in under a week; proceeds from the album, titled *Kinshasa One Two* (out now), benefit the aid organization Oxfam International.

Every morning, musicians would gather at the studio – a hot, cavelike space at the

French Cultural Institute – and jam for 30 or 45 minutes at a stretch. The producers would disappear into a war-room-like command center to edit what they'd heard on their laptops and iPads. At the end of the week, it had somehow come together as a beautiful whole.

Among Albarn's crew were producer Dan the Automator and Richard Russell, head of U.K. indie XL (home to Thom Yorke, Vampire Weekend and Adele). But the locals were the real stars of the show. Take the wiry, Coolio-haired smooth talker Love, who was officially the group's escort but ended up being a natural on the mic. Or the black-leather-clad, glowering N'Gotshima – an (if the locals are to be believed) actual bank robber, whose band Gwata Vibra Brutal were his accomplices. As Cuba said, "Everyone plays music here. Everyone."

On the last day, Albarn visited a school built from Oxfam donations. He was polite and engaged, but he didn't seem too excited. "I kind of hate all that," he admitted later, referring to Bono-style glad-handing. "Do-gooder stuff. It makes me uncomfortable because it isn't really real. But when you've got musicians sweating together, learning together – music, that's real."

JOSH EELLS

IN THE NEWS

Leonard Cohen plots new album in 2012

At a press conference in Spain, Cohen confirmed that *Old Ideas*, his first LP of new material in seven years, is



Cohen

due out next spring. "I've played it for a few people and they seem to like it," said the song-

writer, who penned the tunes with his longtime collaborator Sharon Robinson and his girlfriend Anjani. "Each time you take up your guitar or sit by a blank page, you start from scratch. It's a struggle."

Grateful Dead launching new live archive series

Six years after the last installment in their *Dick's Picks* official bootleg series, the Dead are going back to the vaults. Their new *Dave's Picks* series, curated by archivist **David Lemieux**, will kick off in February with a recording of their May 25th, 1977, show in Richmond, Virginia. "It's one of the best shows from one of the best tours, and it sounds great," says Lemieux. "It's unique, it's inspired and it's incredibly well-played."

Robin Gibb hospitalized amid health concerns

The **Bee Gees** singer was taken to a hospital in Oxford, England, on October 13th and treated for inflammation of



Gibb

the colon. After pulling out of several appearances, Gibb made a U.K. TV appearance on October 24th,

where he appeared dangerously gaunt and declined to answer health questions. Gibb had surgery last year for a blocked intestine, the same ailment that led to the death of his brother and bandmate **Maurice** in 2003.

Ben Gibbard, Zooey Deschanel separate

The **Death Cab for Cutie** frontman and the **She & Him** singer and actress announced



on November 1st that they are separating after two years of marriage.

The couple met three years ago through their shared manager. "I'd seen her movies, and obviously I thought she was very beautiful," Gibbard recently said. "I was just awestruck that she was even talking to me."

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RS PLAYLIST

OUR FAVORITE SONGS, ALBUMS AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW



1 ARCADE FIRE AND NEIL YOUNG "Helpless"
The highlight of Neil Young's 25th annual Bridge School Benefit on October 22nd came when he joined Arcade Fire for a spellbinding run through his devastating 1970 ballad – trading verses with Win Butler in a historic falsetto-off, captured for the ages on YouTube.

2 YELAWOLF FEAT. KID ROCK "Let's Roll"

Two hip-hop-loving white guys with bottomless wells of redneck pride unite for a rowdy, crazy-catchy celebration of all things trailer-chic. Instant radio domination!



3 THE ROLLING STONES "We Had It All"

The Stones' new *Some Girls* reissue is full of killer outtakes. But this lost treasure – with Keith Richards delivering heartbreak-soaked lead vocals on the country standard made famous by Waylon and Dolly's versions – is the best of the bunch.



4 GIRL IN A COMA "Smart"

Three totally Smiths-obsessed girls from San Antonio make a totally Smiths-y stunner with this head-over-heels love song. All jangly riffs and singalong choruses, it's the highlight of their new LP, *Exits & All the Rest*.



5 COLDPLAY "We Found Love"

Who knew that Rihanna's latest glow-stick smash would sound even better as a tender piano ballad? Chris Martin worked his magic on the tune for a recent BBC radio performance, with surprisingly stellar results.

6 MAZZY STAR "Common Burn"

Fifteen years after their last LP, the shoe-gaze heroes are back and as awesomely lovely as ever. On their cough-syrup-dream of a new single, singer Hope Sandoval coos seductively over cotton-candy keyboards and slide guitar. Take that, chillwave bros!

8 WILD FLAG "Electric Band" video

Baseball season is over – sorry again, Texas! – but there's still time for one last grudge match on the diamond. In this hilarious video, the indie-rock vets defeat a team of ball-playin' grizzly bears, thanks to singer-guitarist Mary Timony's ace fielding.



ON THE WEB

Duck Sauce Go Nuts (Literally)

Inside the DJ duo's creepy-funny viral clip

The sidesplittingly vulgar video for Duck Sauce's "Big Bad Wolf" – in which two guys hit the club with the heads of DJs A-Trak and Armand Van Helden replacing their genitals – has racked up over 1.6 million views since hitting the Web on October 24th. But not everyone approves. "My mom was like, 'It's funny, but it makes me uncomfortable,'" says A-Trak. "I can't show



it to your father!" At least Kanye loves it: Says A-Trak, who spent years as the rapper's DJ, "He told me, 'You took an artistic risk by pissing out of your mouth.'"

BEHIND THE SCENES "The song sounded like swagger," says director Keith Schofield. "I had this image of these guys walking down the street with massive, four-foot cocks." After convincing Schofield to cast them as literal dickheads, A-Trak and Van Helden spent two days on all fours in green-screen jumpsuits with actors straddling their necks. "I'm trying to erase that from my memory," says A-Trak. "But we felt like, if we're going to do this video, we've got to go all the way."

GREATEST HITS Duck Sauce – who scored their first viral hit last year with the celeb-packed video for "Barbra Streisand," which has 63 million YouTube plays and counting – doubt "Big Bad Wolf" will get quite that huge. "I have a hard time imagining 'Big Bad Wolf' playing at a bar mitzvah," says A-Trak. "But we never thought 'Barbra Streisand' would be as big as it was. Maybe the universe will prove me wrong."

MELISSA ARSENIUK

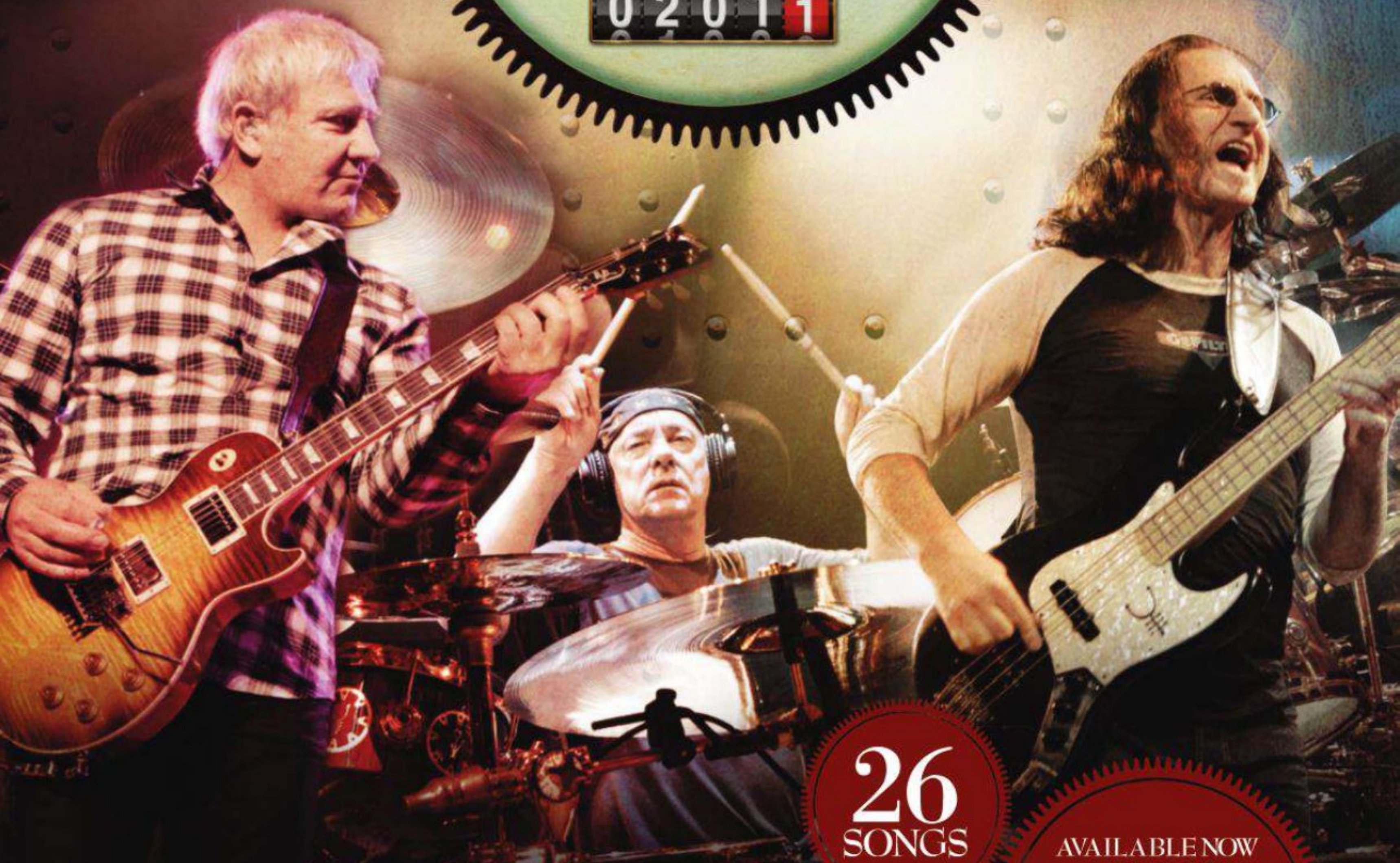
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Q&A

Dan Auerbach

The Black Keys frontman on their badass new LP, rocking arenas and making an unforgettable visit to Al Green's church

By Austin Scaggs

THE BLACK KEYS' NEW ALBUM IS CALLED "EL Camino" – but the ride on the cover is a beat-up Dodge Grand Caravan. "It's not the exact van, but it's similar to the one that we toured in for two years when we started the band," says singer-guitarist Dan Auerbach. "All of the gear fit behind the rear bench, and we took the middle seats out so we could sleep on the floor." During those early-2000s years on the road, when the A/C went out in the West Texas summer and Auerbach woke up with his nose gushing blood, or when drummer Patrick Carney accidentally spilled a bottle of urine, the Keys never guessed how big their blues-rock duo could get. But after last year's breakthrough LP, *Brothers*, the Keys – who cut *El Camino* (out December 6th) with producer Danger Mouse in Nashville, where the duo recently relocated from their Akron, Ohio, hometown – are poised to headline arenas and festivals in 2012. Auerbach checks in from Amsterdam.

The dancing dude in the video for your new single "Lonely Boy" is pretty amazing. Who is that guy?

Derrick Tuggle! There was a much more complicated video – me and Pat were in it – but we decided to scrap it and just use D-Tug dancing. We were behind the camera when he did his one and only dance take. He murdered it!

How did you and Patrick write the songs?

Every one started in the studio. For *Brothers*, I had all of the lyrics and most of the chord changes written before we went to record. But with *El Camino*, we started from scratch every day. "Lonely Boy" started with that opening riff, Pat put down a beat and we just built

it from there. I blurted out "lonely boy," and I was like, "Fuck! That's good!"

Is the whole album as good as "Lonely Boy"?

Yeah. That wasn't even the obvious single. The album is really strong melodically, and it's short and to the point.

Like Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers said, "Don't bore us, get to the chorus." That was the model that we lived by.

Do you remember the first time you met Patrick?

We've known each other since I started having memories. Our brothers were buddies. They told us to get together when I was 17 and Pat was 16. We'd never hung out, but I walked to his house with a guitar and an amp and went down to his basement and started fucking around. We hit it off immediately.

Has there been a moment when you realized the Keys had finally made it?

No – we haven't been on the cover of *ROLLING STONE* yet! [Laughs] But some of the arena shows in Canada this summer felt like we were in Madison Square Garden. It was crazy to look out and think, "We're about to fill this giant fucking place."

What else are you working on at your new studio in Nashville?

We just finished records by the Growlers and a girl from Memphis named Valerie June. And we're finishing up the record I'm producing for Dr. John, which is so fucking amazing. He'll be in town for Thanksgiving, so I guess we'll be eating some turkey.

Whose lyrics do you dig these days?

Mostly hip-hop guys – Roc Marciano, Sean Price, Danny Brown. Those

guys can really turn a phrase, be funny and deep, like Bob Dylan's best lines.

I heard you once went to Memphis to see Al Green preach at his church. What was that like?

The church wasn't packed – it was all locals – and we sat in the back and were the only white people there. I'll never forget, he came out and sang "Amazing Grace" a cappella. It's the best performance I've ever seen in my life.

Do you miss anything about Akron?

Not really. I wasn't even in Akron that much because we were always on tour. I do miss Rancho's Taqueria, but it wasn't worth sticking around for, no matter how good the guacamole was.



BRIAN KERSEY/AP IMAGES

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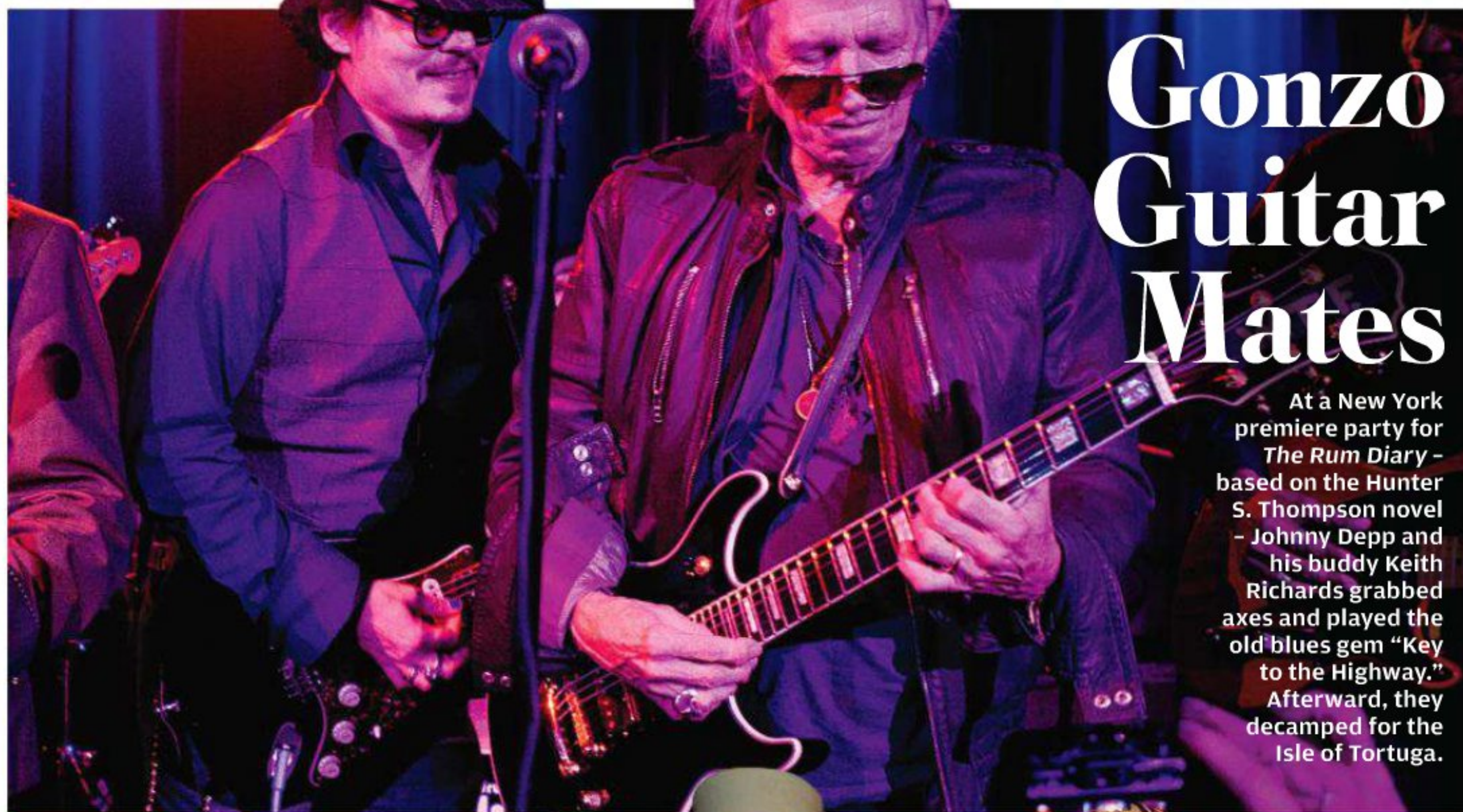
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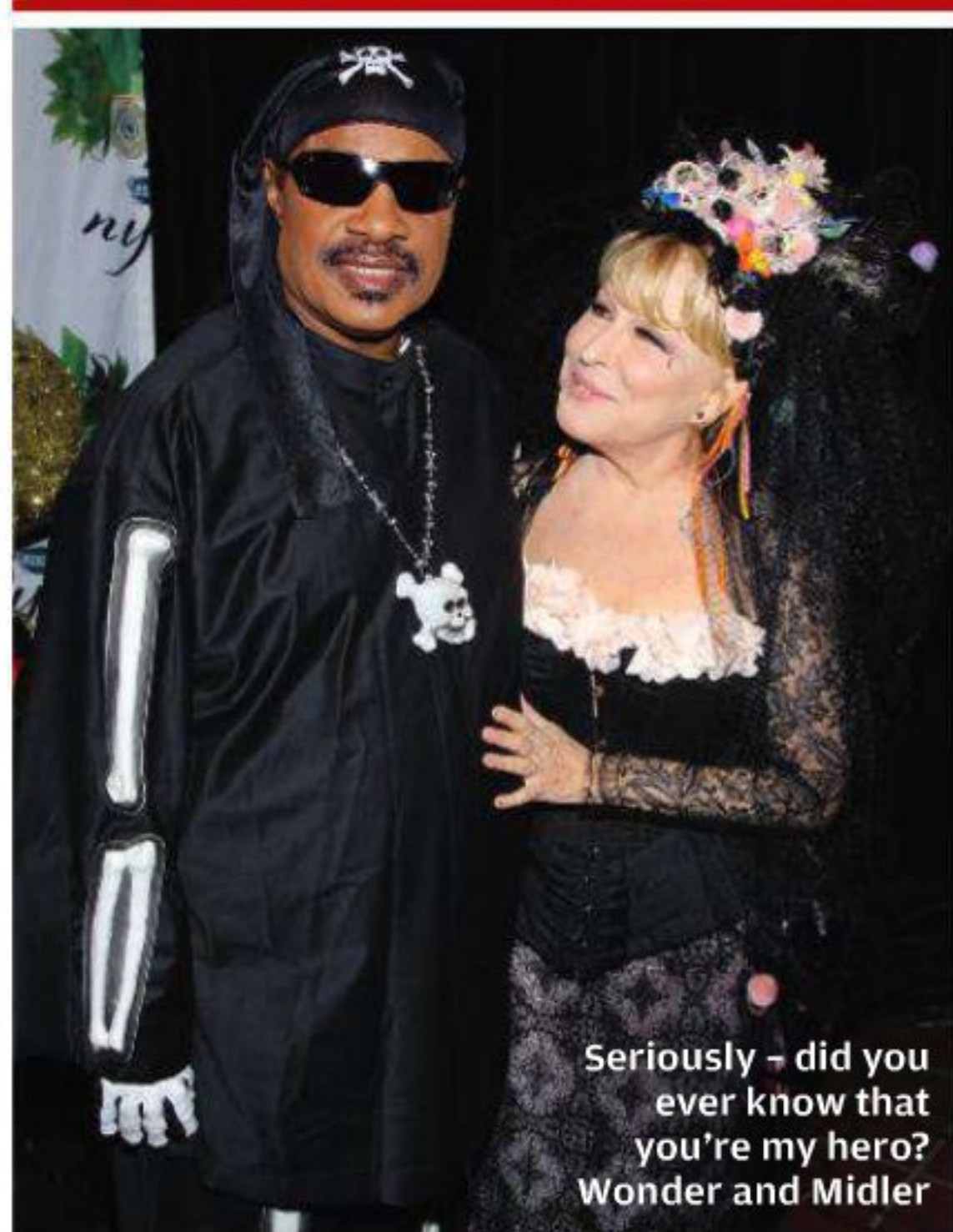
"Just drove by the hotel I lost my virginity in. Brought a tear to my eye." —Jared Followill

Random Notes



Gonzo Guitar Mates

At a New York premiere party for *The Rum Diary*—based on the Hunter S. Thompson novel—Johnny Depp and his buddy Keith Richards grabbed axes and played the old blues gem "Key to the Highway." Afterward, they decamped for the Isle of Tortuga.



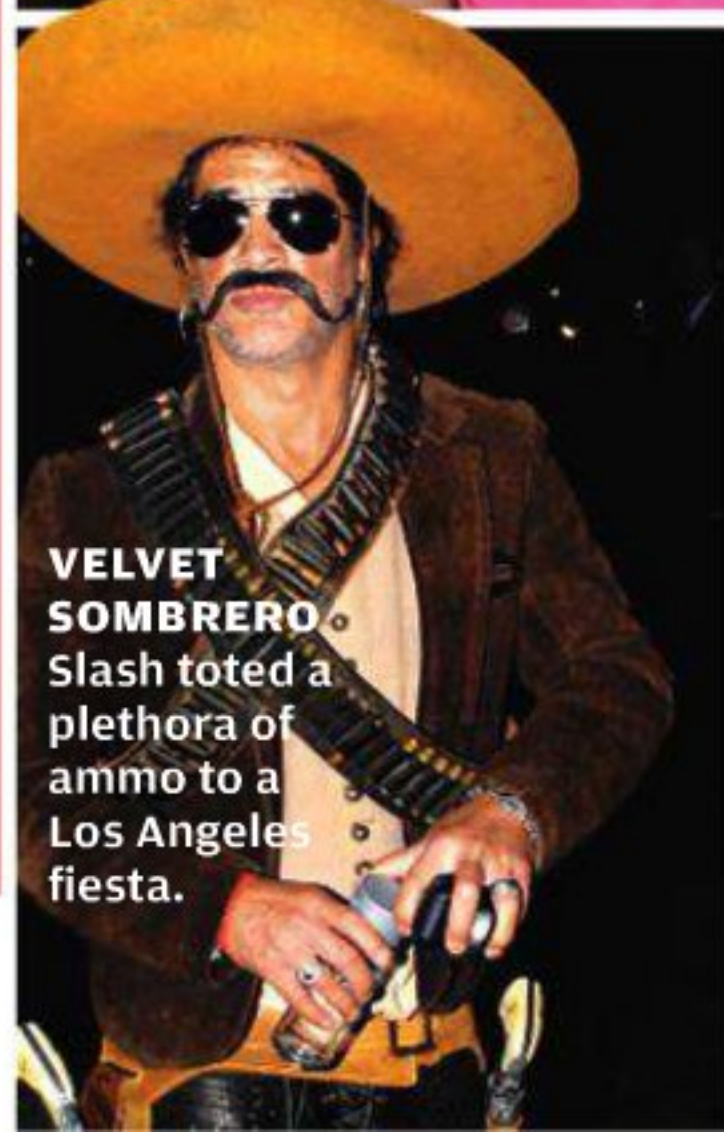
Seriously—did you ever know that you're my hero? Wonder and Midler

Bette's Fete

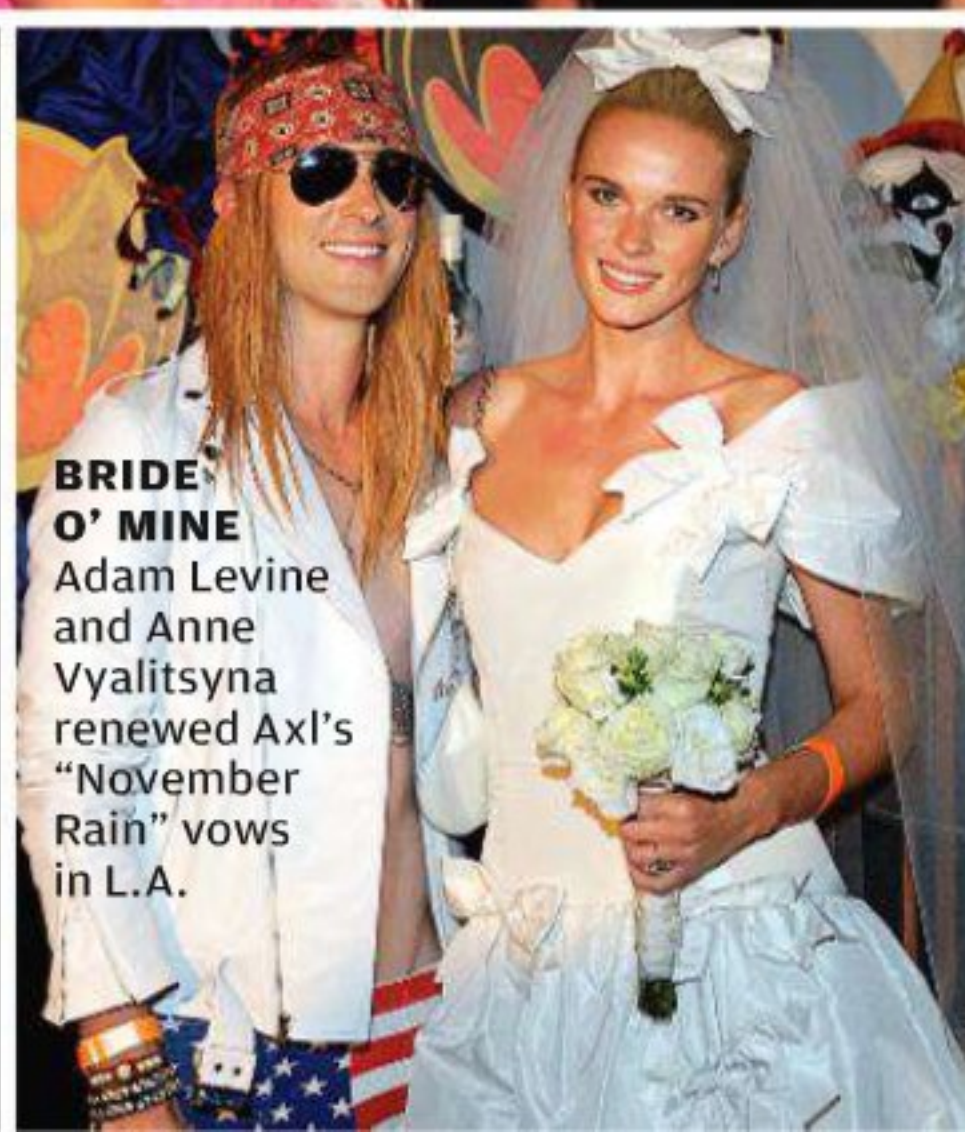
"Even dead, I look fabulous," cracked Bette Midler, hosting her annual Hulaween charity gala at New York's Waldorf-Astoria. A skeleton Stevie Wonder helped raise nearly \$2 million for the New York Restoration Project, busting out MJ's zombie anthem "Thriller" and other songs in the key of death.



WHEN OCTOBER ENDS
At Green Day's New York club gig, drummer Tre Cool missed the frightwear memo.

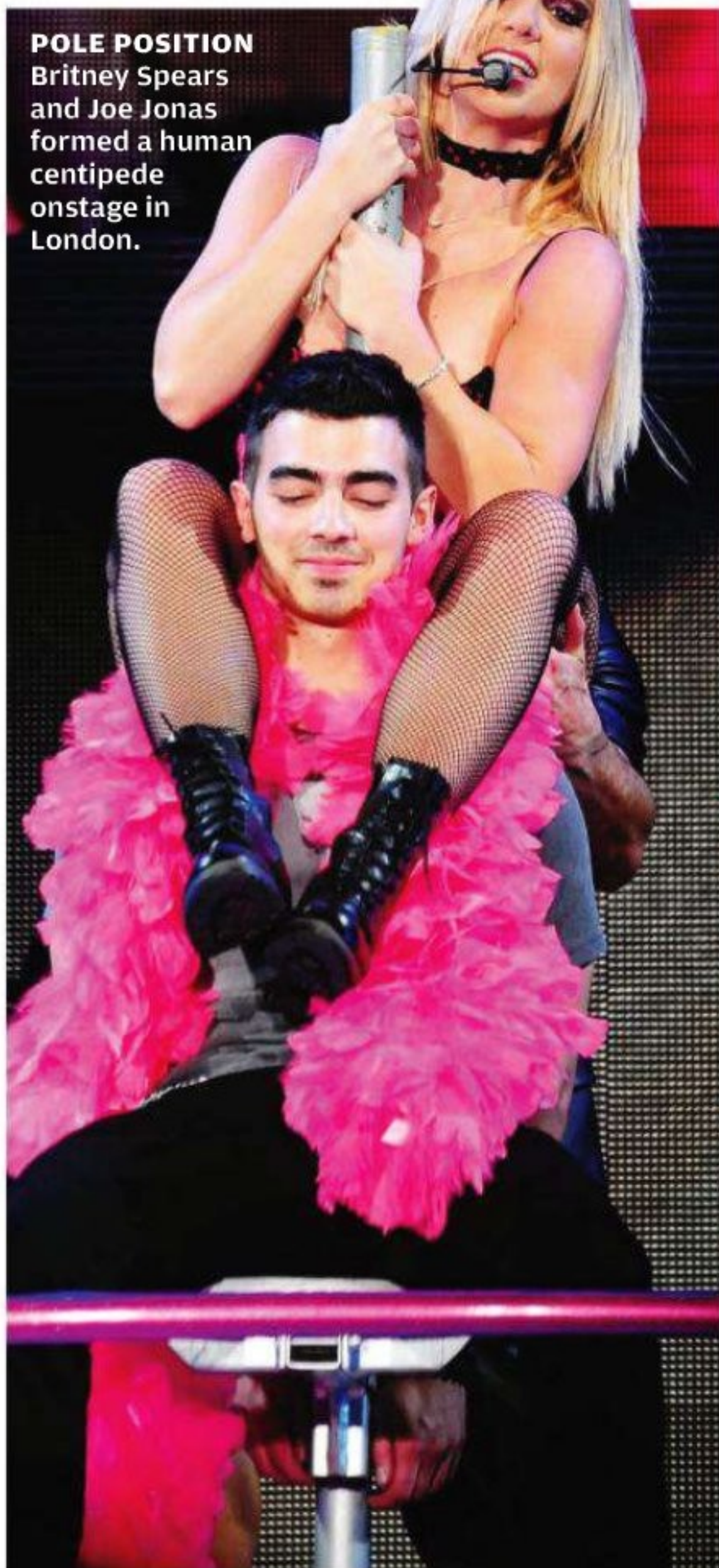


VELVET SOMBRERO
Slash toted a plethora of ammo to a Los Angeles fiesta.

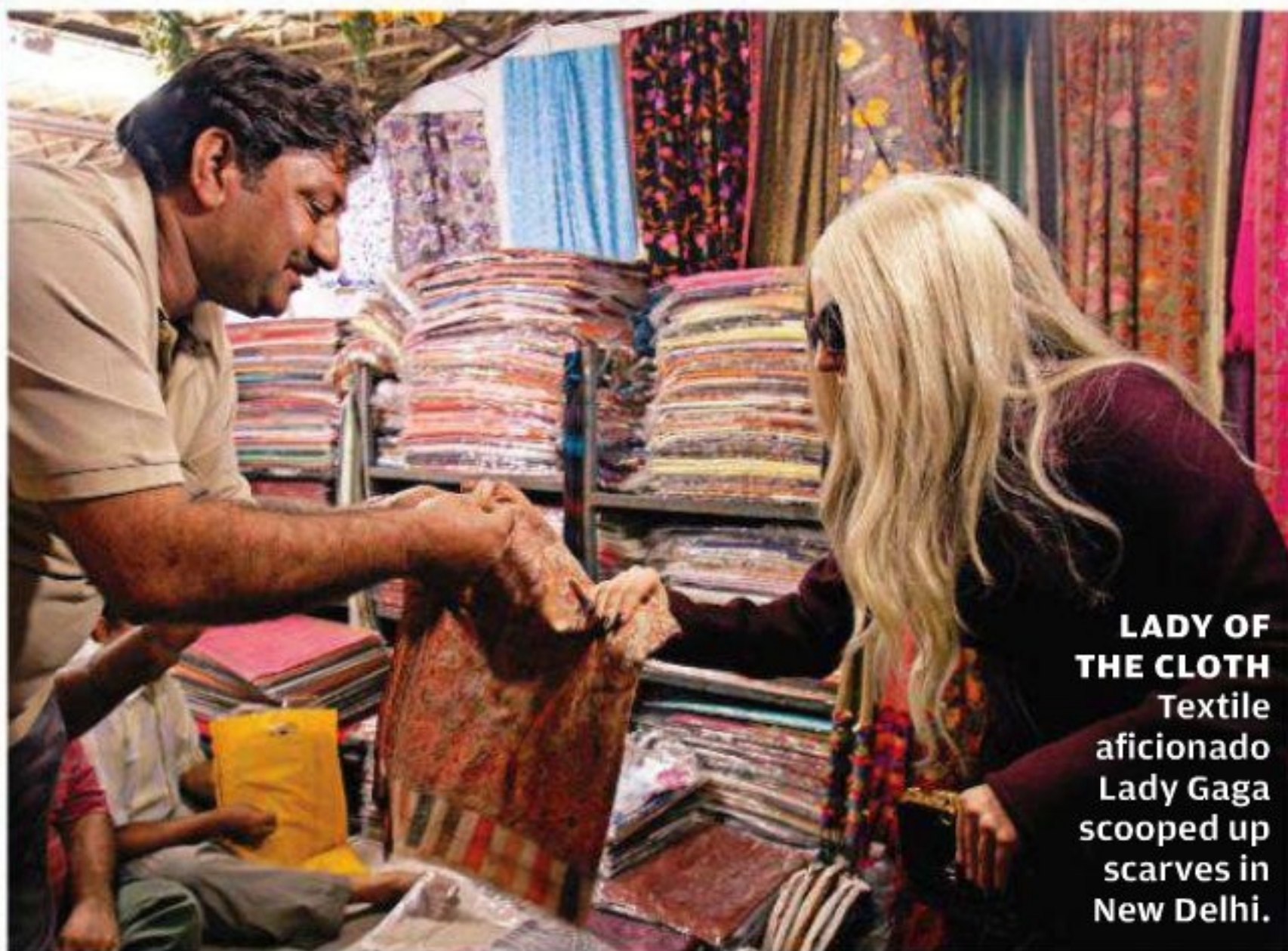


BRIDE O' MINE
Adam Levine and Anne Vyalitsyna renewed Axl's "November Rain" vows in L.A.

POLE POSITION
Britney Spears
and Joe Jonas
formed a human
centipede
onstage in
London.



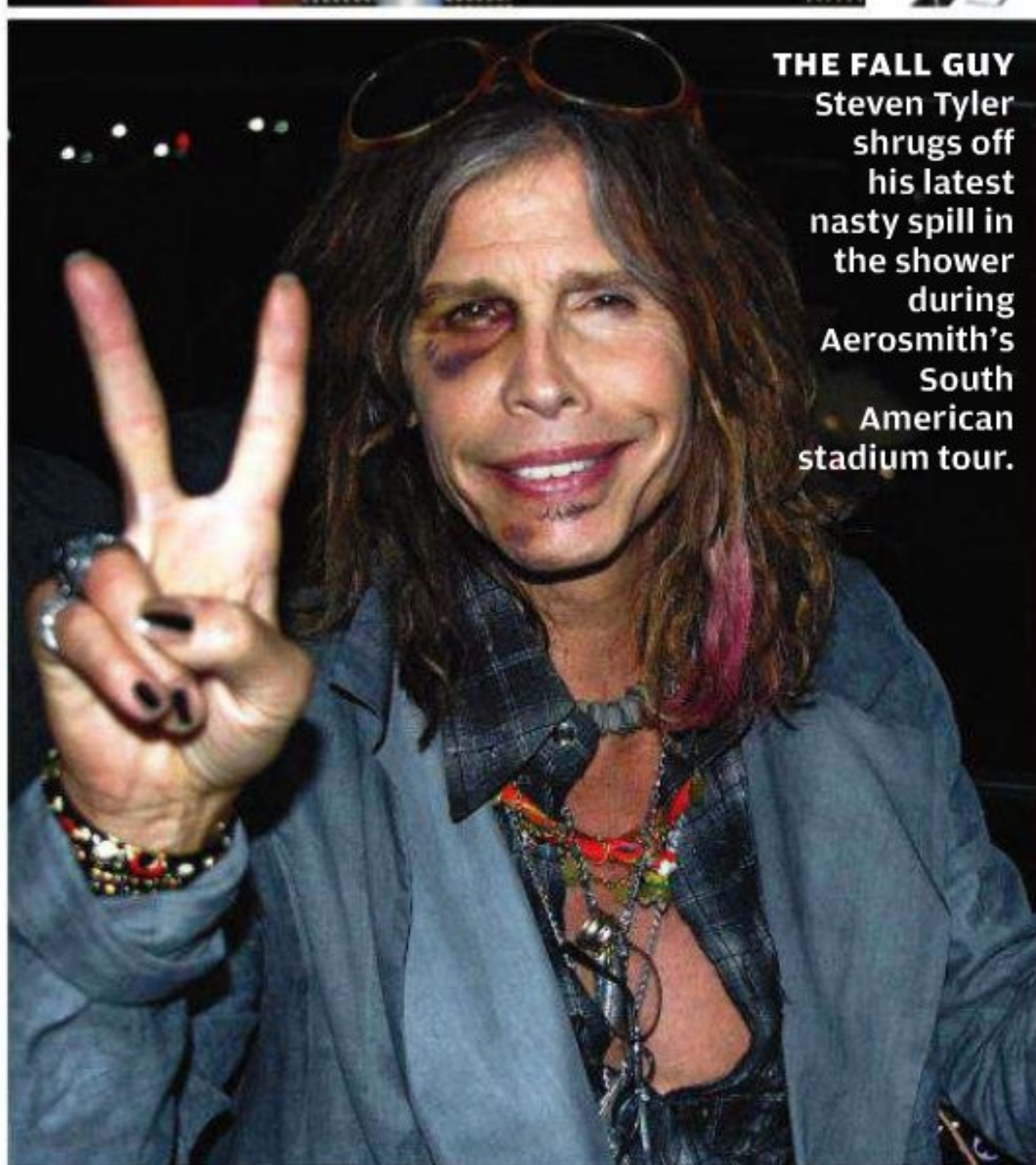
**LADY OF
THE CLOTH**
Textile
aficionado
Lady Gaga
scooped up
scarves in
New Delhi.



WAYNE'S REIGN
Lil Wayne was
king of the club
during a surprise
appearance
in Miami.



THE FALL GUY
Steven Tyler
shrugs off
his latest
nasty spill in
the shower
during
Aerosmith's
South
American
stadium tour.



Bridge School Bonanza

An all-star bill of rockers joined Neil Young's 25th annual Bridge School Benefit in Mountain View, California, including Eddie Vedder, Dave Matthews, Beck, Mumford & Sons and Arcade Fire. Vedder and Beck teamed up for the country classic "Sleepless Nights" before Sir Neil led a group jam on the Youngbloods' "Get Together."



Vedder and Beck
tried not to
notice their
matching hats.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: STEPHANIE METHVEN/WENN; VIJAY MATHUR/REUTERS; SETH BROWNIK/STARTRAKSPHOTO.COM; TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES; MURAL DA FAMA/SPLASH NEWS

TELEVISION

Captain America

The angry white dude has never had a nobler – or funnier – hero than Ron Swanson from 'Parks and Recreation'

By Rob Sheffield

RON SWANSON IS MORE than the MVP of the *Parks and Recreation* squad, more than just the funniest character on TV – he's the perfect depiction of aggrieved American manhood at the twilight of the empire. He has

Parks and Recreation

Thursdays, 8:30 p.m., NBC

a face sculpted out of glare, a mustache of granite, a helmet of hair held in place by sheer force of will and eyes that can strip the paint off speedboats.

As embodied by the great Nick Offerman, who says more by clenching two-sevenths of his right eyebrow than most actors say with their whole bodies, Ron Swanson is the familiar sitcom archetype of the ornery boss, in the tradition of Ed Asner on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* or Danny DeVito on *Taxi*. The big difference is that he's the boss of a petty government bureaucracy that embodies everything he hates. The ground he's staking is strictly his own wounded pride. The facial hair he loves so much isn't a symbol of the turf he is straining to defend – it *is* the turf.

He's a full-on believer in the Ron Swanson pyramid of greatness: meat, guns and wood-working. The rule book for his scout troop consists of just three words – "Be a man" – and he proudly declares, "I only read nautical novels and my own personal manifestos."

The fall has been full of terrible new sitcoms about one-note American white-guy cranks struggling against the ladies who push them around. It's the same joke over and over, whether it's Kevin Dillon in *How to Be a Gentleman* – which got the ax after two episodes – or Tim Allen in the miserable but pop-



PAWNEE'S FINEST
Offerman's Ron Swanson is the funniest anti-government civil servant in history.

ular *Last Man Standing*. But Ron works on a much deeper level, because he has real pathos and humanity in his endless resentment.

Part of the Swanson effect is just how much American culture has changed in the time that *Parks and Rec* has been on the air. Ron has existed for less than three years, but his fringe political views have turned into the Republican mainstream, if not the whole message of the primary debates, which are *Parks and Rec*'s main comedy competition this fall. His crack-

pot rants about the government are now the kind of thing Republican candidates say when they're trying to get taken seriously. When they filmed the episode where Ron gets audited and barks, "First of all, income tax is illegal," they had no way of knowing that by the time it aired, Michele Bachmann would have already made this her campaign theme.

We have no clue how Ron turned out this way, but we feel for him because he's a little *too* young to be this guy. The old-school TV versions of Ron were

the WWII vets – Lou Grant and Archie Bunker. They might be cranks, but they spent their youth heroically participating in the most successful tax-funded project in the history of federal governments, which was beating the Nazis, and then came home to build the America whose passing Ron Swanson mourns. Those old coots can look back with pride. Ron doesn't have a career to brag about – he's proud to do his government job as ineffectually as he can.

We don't know when exactly Ron decided the modern world was too complex and confusing for him and began to stoically hide behind his armor of facial hair. But whatever we think of Ron's code, we respect and admire him for living by it. It turns out we need his mustache as much as he does.

Life After Charlie

Sheen's ghost haunts 'Two and a Half Men'

WHO WOULD'VE GUESSED that on the Ashton Kutcher edition of *Two and a Half Men*, Charlie Sheen would still be snagging the biggest laughs? They may have killed off his character, but they can't stop using him for giggles, even doing an episode where Jon

Two and a Half Men

Mondays, 9 p.m., CBS

Cryer finds Charlie's old diary and reads it aloud. Something is definitely nuts when America's favorite sitcom gives the juiciest gags to a deceased character's appetite for NC-17 thrills. *Two and a Half Men* still isn't very funny, but it's easy to take, which is why it's such a ratings machine. As the new guy, Kutcher breezes through the same mellow stoner-stud routine he's been doing since *That '70s Show*. Yet the lingering presence of Dead Charlie gives it all a touch of *Jane Eyre* psychodrama. Even Kutcher strolling around naked can't compete with the housekeeper writing a biography of Charlie called *Man Whore*. **C**

THE WATCH LIST

American Hoggers

Wednesdays, 10 p.m., A&E

Damn you, wild boars! Must you run over the Texas plains, terrorizing innocent farmers? But this reality show about a family hit squad of cowboy feral-hog hunters is out to teach those mean ol' boars a lesson in manners. Prepare for frontier justice – piggy style!

Once Upon a Time

Sundays, 8 p.m., ABC

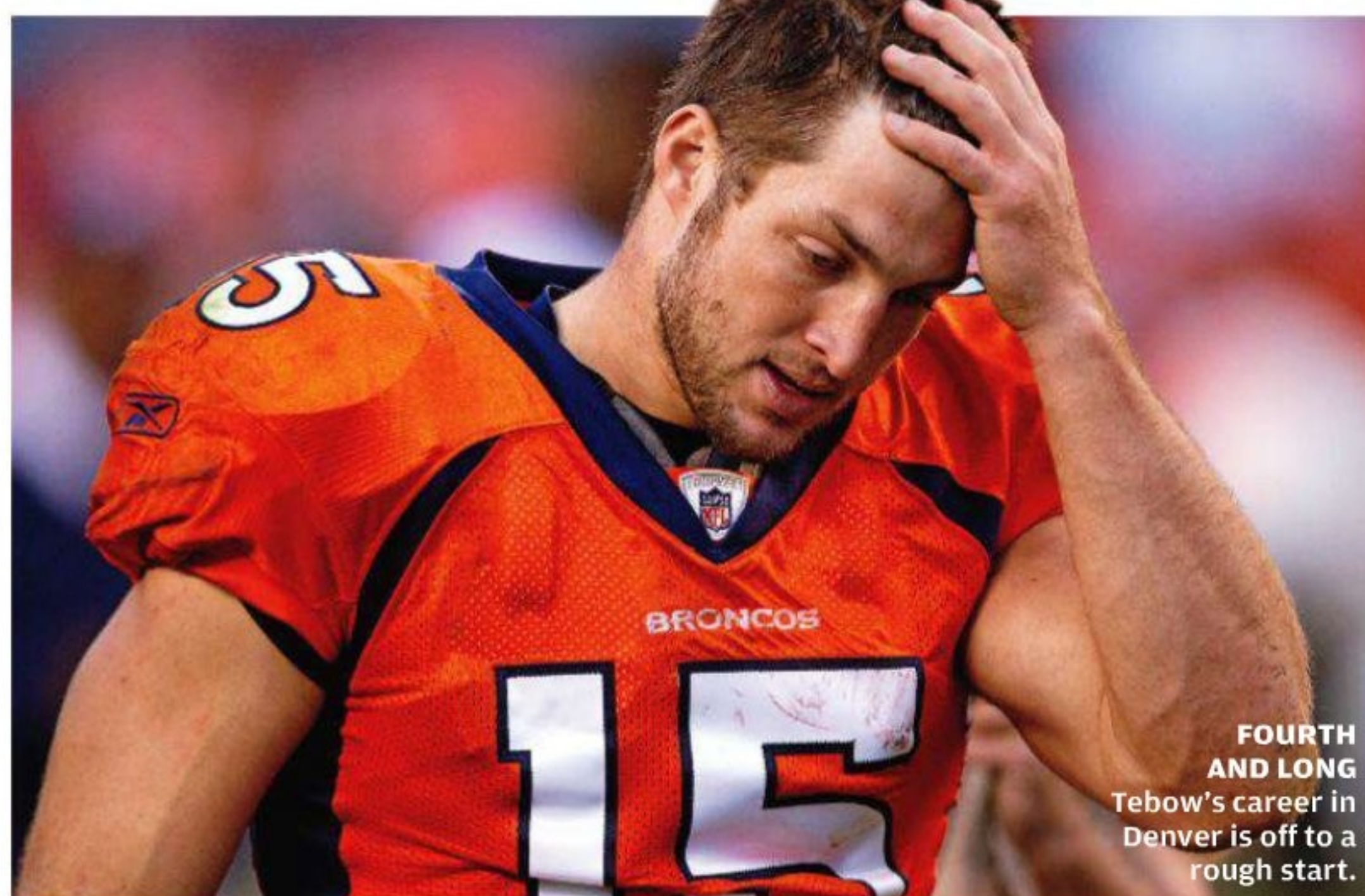
If you're going fairy tale, you may as well go *full* fairy tale. So this bizarrely entertaining *Lost*-style drama has Prince Charming and Snow White battling the Evil Queen in a town called Storybrooke, Maine. Secret weapon: *Trainspotting*'s Robert Carlyle as Rumpelstiltskin. **R.S.**

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FOURTH AND LONG
Tebow's career in Denver is off to a rough start.

God Fumbles!

It's going to be a long season for Tim Tebow, the overhyped, über-Christian quarterback of the Denver Broncos By Matt Taibbi

GOD MUST NOT KNOW shit about football if Tim Tebow is his idea of an NFL quarterback.

We all saw this coming. A year and a half ago, every NFL fan base in the league held its collective breath before the draft, praying fervently that their team would not make the fatal mistake of selecting Florida Gators icon Tim Tebow with a high draft choice.

If football is America's real national religion, then the faithful knew that Tebow was born to play the role of the backup QB, the clipboard-carrying Savior, the first-round pick who spends the early years of his career being the knife end that impatient fans plunge into the starting QB's back every time he takes a dumb sack or throws an ill-advised pass.

Nobody has ever been better cast for this role than Tebow. We've had our share of plucky, try-hard athletes who dominated in college and brought huge fan bases with them to the pros – think of Doug Flutie, J.J. Redick and Tyler Hansbrough – but Tebow has inspired more Great White Hope clichés than all of those guys combined.

Before he even set foot on an NFL field, it was football gospel that the beatific Gator was a “great competitor” with “great intangibles,” who was a “born leader,” breathless descriptions that, in addition to being a galling overt insult to the thousand-plus other true NFL tough guys who apparently have been shallow, half-assing jerks all these years, carried with them one powerful underlying message: Tebow sucks.

Every man on Earth knows what it means when a guy describes a woman as having a “great personality,” and yet somehow tens of thousands of grown men didn't know what it meant when one football analyst after another kept talking about how Tebow was a “special person.” Watching Tebow play quarterback is an embarrassing, painful experience; the poor kid takes 10 minutes to pass the ball, and if he has to make more than one read in a play, his brain locks up like a truck axle caught on a tree branch, and he ends up either throwing the ball straight into the ground or running face-first into the defensive line.

In that respect, Tebow's first start, against the hapless

Miami Dolphins, was one of the most amazing sports contests ever shown on television, with Tebow freezing at the sight of one open receiver after another while Dolphins coach Tony Sparano similarly stood dumbfounded, like a man whose brain was being eaten by beetles, as he made one catastrophic call after another. Seeing Sparano's late decision to go for two, despite

Descriptions like “great competitor” all mask the simple underlying message: Tebow sucks.

being up by two scores, was like watching a man stand up in the middle of a live-fire exercise.

Yet when it was all over, and Tebow had “won” the game when his counterpart Matt Moore fumbled in field-goal range in overtime, the media orgy was fully on.

TIM-TASTIC! shouted *The Denver Post*. A new website appeared, celebrating the act of “Tebowing,” defined as kneeling in celebratory prayer, “even

if everyone else around you is doing something completely different.” People around the world sent in photos of themselves “Tebowing” – soldiers abroad Tebowing, guys on forklifts Tebowing, old ladies and their miniature dogs Tebowing, etc. And the NFL's official website stooped to a new low when it marketed Tebow's next game, against the Detroit Lions and their fearsome front seven, as “Good versus Evil.”

The NFL, of course, has seen plenty of extremely religious athletes before, including all-time stars like Reggie White and Kurt Warner, but it never sunk to marketing those players' godliness – for the obvious reason that you don't have to market a player's religion when the guy can, you know, actually play.

None of this was Tebow's fault. A twentysomething kid who's just trying to make it in sports has no control over millions of fans and armies of sportswriters turning him into a symbol of righteousness and a warrior in the fight against cultural relativism. Nor does Tebow have any control over all the preposterous things that have been said of late in a desperate attempt to preserve his legend, not the least of which being a Fox Sports columnist who hinted that Tebow's failures were the result of a Denver coaching staff bent on “sabotaging” him in order to escape from the media frenzy.

And yet, when Tebow came out in his next game and lost to Detroit, 45-10, turning in one of the worst performances in the history of quarterbacking, there was something perversely satisfying about the spectacle.

Witnessing the Tebowmania phenomenon get pulverized under a torrent of ruthless hits by Detroit's Ndamukong Suh, Cliff Avril and Stephen Tulloch (who deliciously “Tebowed” after a sack of the Chosen One) was a little like reliving Clarence Darrow's savage cross-examination of William Jennings Bryan at the Scopes Monkey Trial. In both cases you came away feeling sorry for the defeated, but it was just something that had to be done, like putting away an old dog with cloudy eyes.



DREW BREES
New Orleans Saints Quarterback



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CONFESSIONS OF A DIRTY MIND

WHAT'S UNDER
GEORGE CLOONEY'S
BED? AND OTHER
SECRETS OF THE
COOLEST MAN IN
HOLLYWOOD

By *ERIK HEDEGAARD*

Photograph by MARK SELIGER





AS ANY MOVIE STAR IN the history of movie stars ever been more perfect than George Clooney? Look at him now, sitting in his house high up in the Hollywood Hills, off-white khakis, matching socks, spotless tan desert boots, natty blue polo shirt, dreamy, chocolaty-brown eyes, broad shoulders, a straight line of white (but not too white) teeth, hair graying distinguishedly, legs crossed confidently, the easygoing smile and aura of calm assurance. He is talking about something or other – maybe the failure of politicians these days (“We’re living in a time where we’re so fucking polarized, it’s insane”), maybe the atrocities in Darfur, maybe he’s even saying a few words about his latest two movies, a political drama called *The Ides of March* (“It’s not designed for everybody to see, but I don’t give a shit. I don’t need to be more

famous and we shot it for \$12 million, so anything we do is nice”) and a darkly amusing family drama called *The Descendants* (“If it’s not nominated for Best Picture, I’ll be shocked. It’s that good”). In truth, however, it’s exceedingly difficult to hear anything over the blare of how perfect everything is, both him and his entire orbit. This house, for instance, isn’t just a house; it’s an English Tudor kingdom, with a basketball-and-tennis court, a swimming pool, wet bars, waterfalls, a stainless-steel grill (“I do a mean lamb chop! I’m a master griller!”), a 3D screening room and a Louisville Slugger baseball bat, model C271, hidden under the master-suite bed, for Clooney to use on intruders should anyone ever intrude (which no one ever has). Then there’s his lush 18th-century villa on Lake Como, in Italy, where famous folks like to gather, get down, and jump off a wall into the lake (“I got Charlie Rose to do it a few weeks ago, after chumming the water with Marisa Tomei and Evan Rachel Wood”). And then there are the girlfriends, always beautiful, always leggy (“I’ve always been kind of a

leg man”), and when it’s time for them to go, they always go without fuss or harsh public comment. Really, it’s almost unbelievable and nearly too much.

And so here he sits, at his leisure, smoothing down his trousers, saying, “I think one of the major misconceptions about me is that I live my life the way people think I lead my life, with hot and cold drinks running everywhere and a party all the time. They think of my life in terms of certain excesses that don’t really exist. Things are actually fairly simple.” Case in point, how today started: “Let’s see,” he

“IF YOU LOOK AT A LIST OF TOP TEN SINS, THERE’S NOTHING ABOUT ‘THOU SHALT NOT HANDLE THINE JOHNSON.’”

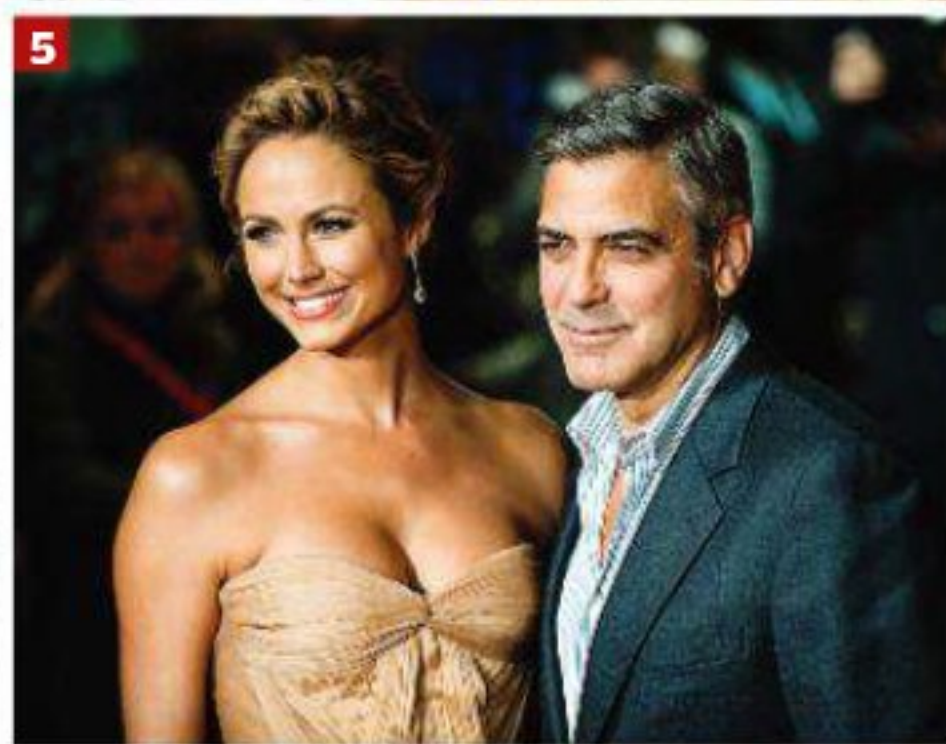
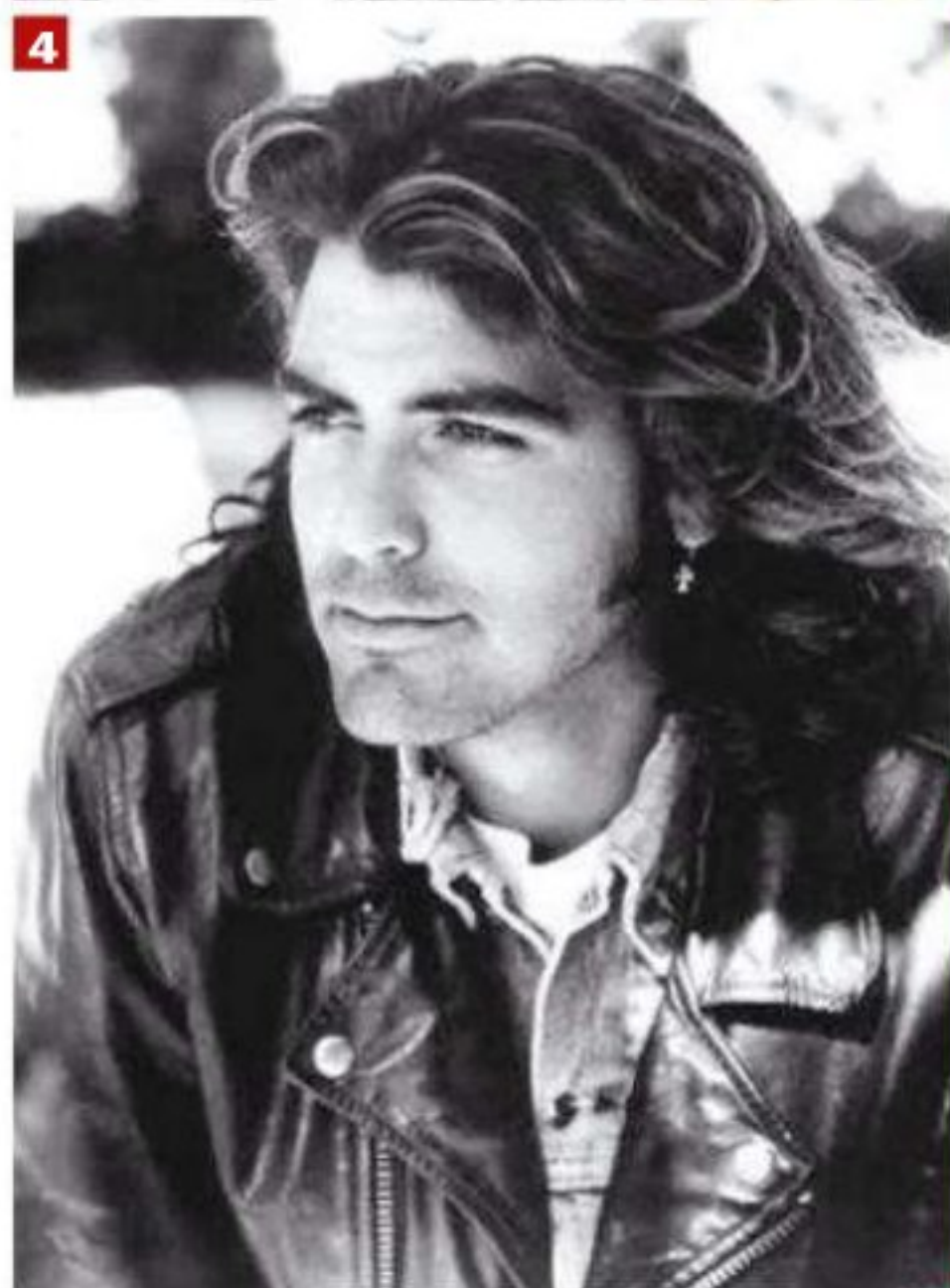
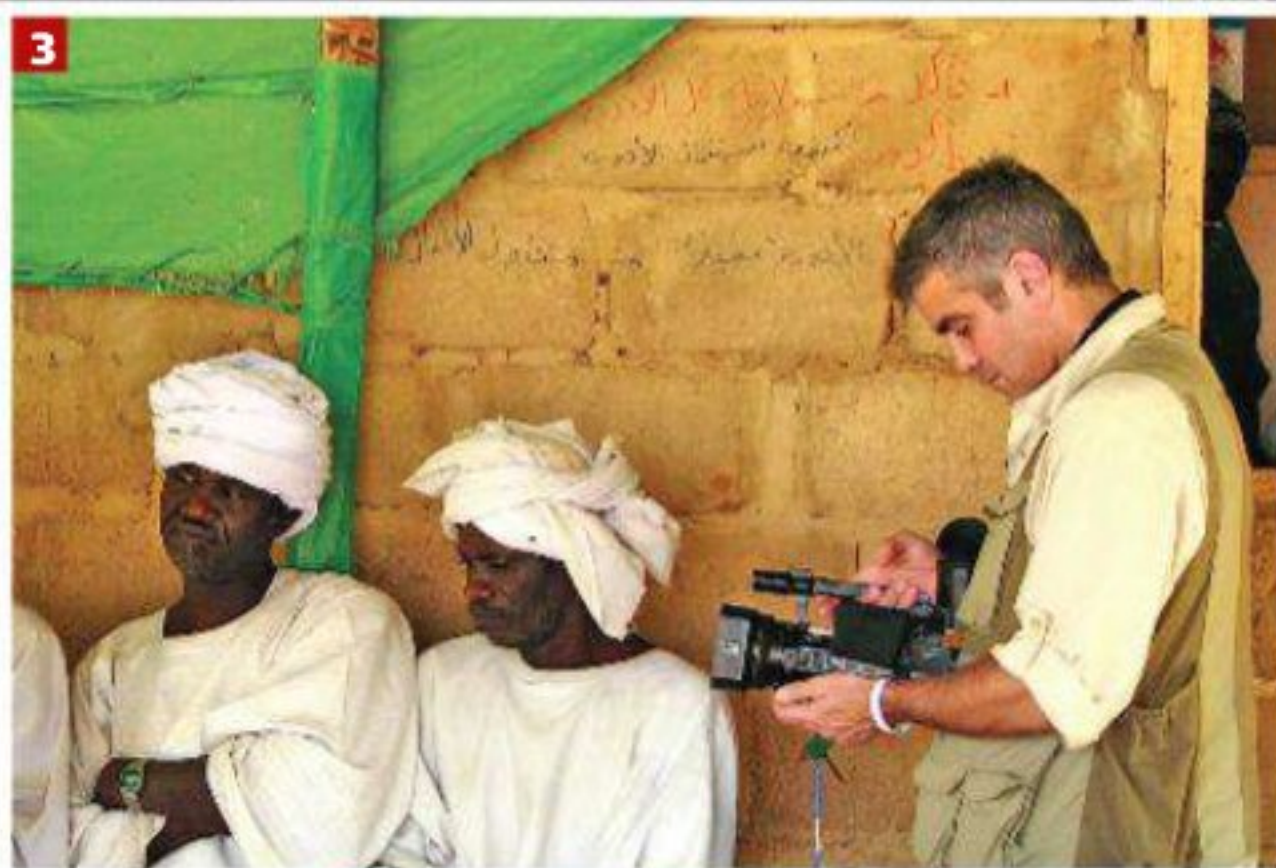
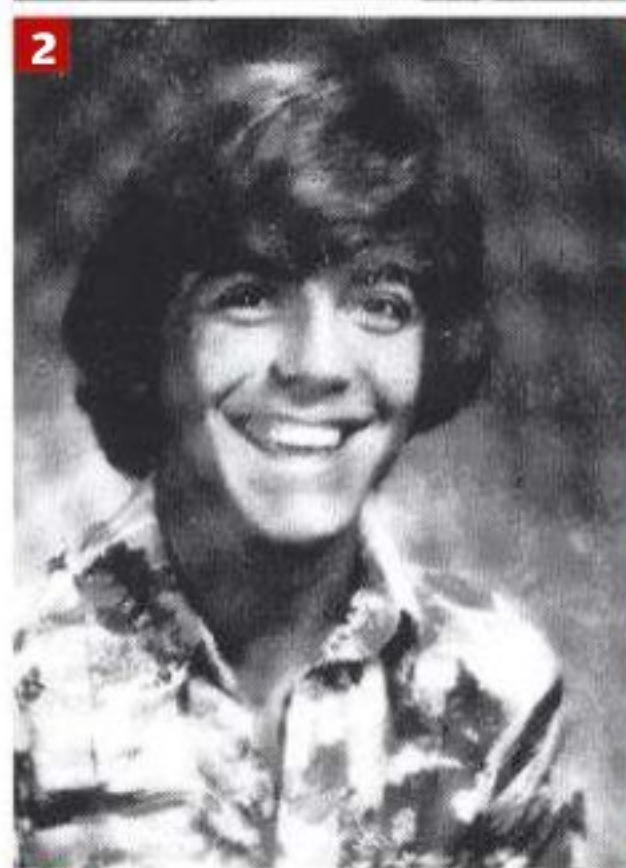
says. “Up at 7:30, with my damn dog at the bedroom door. Einstein. He’s a shelter dog. His name should be Jackpot. Anyway, I put on a robe and came down and fed the dog. I brushed my teeth and took a leak – simultaneously, if you can, would be a very good move, but if I did that, I’d get toothpaste on my balls. Then I took a shower, worked up a good sweat on the stationary bicycle, and I took another shower. After that, a doctor came over for this physical I get every six months. He took blood, cans of blood. He also took my blood pressure, which was very low, by the way, 98 over 68.”

Of course it was. How could it be otherwise? The looks, the money, the fame, the charm, the women, the sheer decency of the guy, the doctor who makes house calls – you name it, he’s got it, and now the low blood pressure, too, by the way. It’s not fair. It’s just not fair that it should all happen to one guy. What about the rest of us? Achoo, *gesundheit*, *bubkis*? At the very least, however, he must have paid a price for it. And it must have been a very dear price, indeed.

ALL THE TIME HE GETS compared to the greats – Steve McQueen, Cary Grant, Gregory Peck – and the theorizing about him is endless. He’s the Last True Movie Star. He’s the Last American Man. He’s Hollywood’s perennial bachelor prankster and its most powerful silver-haired statesman. He’s among the very few who can do comedy (*O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *Intolerable Cruelty*), action (*Three Kings*, *The Perfect Storm*), drama (*Up in the Air*, *Michael Clayton*), voice-over (*Fantastic Mr. Fox*), public service (*Syriana*; *Good Night, and Good Luck*), feel-good (*The Ocean’s* series) and feel-bad (*The American*), as well as make the leap from lots of TV (five seasons on *ER*) to movies while surviving any number of bombs (*Batman & Robin*, *One Fine Day*). Furthermore, he’s known as the king of schmooze and the definition of class. To the left, he’s kind of an angel; to the right, he’s more like an idiot. He’s certainly a guy you can count on. “One quality that really sets him apart,” says Steven Soderbergh, who has directed him in six movies, “is that he only picks fights with people who are as powerful as he is, and that’s rare in this business.” So, he’s all this disparate stuff. But the one unifying element you consistently hear about Clooney is, he is always himself. The Clooney you see in the movies is the same Clooney you read about, is the same Clooney who goes to Darfur, is the same Clooney who is sitting here right now saying, “I really am very much what people assume.” There is no separation, and pretty much he hides nothing.

Want to know if he, a boozier of some renown, maybe has a drinking problem? Thrusting his noble head forward, he

Contributing editor ERIK HEDEGAARD profiled Katy Perry in RS 1134/1135.



The Leading Man

(1) Clooney with his local-TV-personality father, mother and sister, in the 1960s. (2) High school, 1977. (3) Working with Darfur refugees in Chad. (4) During his pre-ER acting days, 1989. (5) With his girlfriend, former WWE star Stacy Keibler, in London.

would be pleased to answer that question. "I'm not a big drink-by-myself kind of guy, but I drink plenty," he says. "I enjoy drinking. I've gone through phases where I've drunk too much and had to say, 'OK, I've had too many hangovers in a row now, and I need to mellow this out.' Last time I had a real good bender was after I injured my

neck while making *Syriana*. Getting hammered made the pain a lot easier to deal with, and for a good three months I was pretty thumped every night."

Want to go back a few years and discuss the circumstances of his first orgasm? Not a problem; in fact, he's enthusiastic. "I believe it was while climbing a rope when

I was six or seven years old," he says, his voice rising. "I mean, nothing came out, but all the other elements were there. I remember getting to the top of the rope, hanging off the rope, and going, 'Oh, my God, this feels great!'"

Want to know if Max, the Vietnamese black-bristled potbellied pig he owned and loved for 18 years, had bed-sharing rights? Ask away. "Yes, he did, for quite some time, until he got a little too fat."

Want to know if he has a girlfriend right now? Um, actually, no, he will not answer that question. "I might have a girlfriend, but I'm never going to talk about it. I get one thing to keep to myself." And let's say you take a tour of his house that ends up in his sleeping quarters, where in the dressing alcove he keeps dozens of white shirts encased behind glass like they were rare wine, and after looking under his bed and finding that baseball bat, you want to know if there's anything interesting in his bedside table; what he'll gently say as he ushers you out is, "Probably not," which can only mean, probably yes. But other than those few things, he's more than willing to open himself up, as he always has been.

At the same time, however, that doesn't mean absolutely everything is out there. He's not keeping secrets. It's just that some parts of his life have never really been looked at or examined. His angry-George period, for example. He had one of those, big-time. It was back in the Nineties. His career was doing OK. But he was angry. He'd get angry at other drivers on the road, "the fucking idiots," and roll down his window to yell, "You fucking assholes!" He'd break his golf clubs and throw them in the lake. He'd smash his tennis racket. He'd fly into jealous rages — "horrible rages where you drive around the girl's apartment, 'I know she's with this other guy!'" Offended by some acquaintance, he'd draft a letter that featured words like "cocksucker" and "flaming asshole." It was bad. And it wasn't driven by anything like, say, his long-standing distaste for bullies, which led to the infamous incident where he throttled abusive director David O. Russell during the making of 1999's *Three Kings* and had to be physically dragged away. That's a justifiable anger. This other anger wasn't.

"I haven't been like that for years and years," Clooney says today, "but, yeah, there was that period. I wish I had some understanding of where it all came from. But who the fuck knows, right?" Well, no one if not him. But he's not a guy naturally given to introspection. One day, for instance, he's asked to complete a few half-started sentences.

"Sure," he says. "Go."

I am—

"50."

It's fun to daydream about—

"Cabo San Lucas."

I feel that my father seldom—

"Disappoints me."

GEORGE CLOONEY

Masturbation is—
“Crucial!”
My conscience bothers me—
“Only at night and during the day.”
My friends don’t know that I’m afraid of—
“My friends.”

See how he is, all quippy and deflective? Could he please stop that?

What I like least about women—
He opens his mouth, nothing comes out. Then he says, “There’s nothing *but* quippy answers.”

How about they all want to get married? He frowns. “But that’s not true, and that’s not what I like least about women.”

Then what is?
“I don’t know. I’ve never thought it through. I would also argue that you’ve boxed me in by saying, ‘Don’t do what you do.’ I’d argue that you’ve taken away all my tools.” He looks agitated. He doesn’t like this game anymore. But that’s OK, because Clooney is not a guy you’d ever like to see at a loss for words. It just seems wrong, like some kind of cosmic violation of the way things should be.

My name is—, and the world is—
He smiles. This one he can handle. “My name is George and the world is in trouble,” he says. “I can name you 40 hot spots in the world right now, and not just physically violent hot spots, but financially violent hot spots as well.” And off he goes, back on an even keel.

ONE DAY WHEN CLOONEY was 14, he was eating with his family at a Frisch’s Big Boy in his Ohio hometown, when he took a sip of milk and it suddenly began to dribble out the side of his mouth. It was the beginning of Bell’s palsy, a form of facial paralysis. His sister Adelia had had it and recovered, now he had it. His face went tingly, his tongue went numb, one eye wouldn’t shut. He was a freshman in high school. His classmates called him Cloon-dog, because his face took on that droopy basset-hound look. Not a pretty sight. Complicating matters was his father, Nick, who was a local TV newsman and the host of his own morning TV talk show.

“You have to remember that in the microcosm of Cincinnati, Ohio, through northern Kentucky, my father was a big star, still is. So that made my sister and me really visible. Everybody knew us, talked about us. If I scored 15 points in a basketball game, the paper would say, ‘Nick Clooney’s son scored 15 points.’ So, it was very awkward, being watched like that, everybody looking at us, and then all of a sudden your face goes flat? My dad would always say, ‘It’s going to go away, you’ll be fine, you can handle it.’ But it was a tricky thing. So, you develop a better personality and learn how to make jokes about it.”

In other words, he started acting. Around that time, sometimes the family had money, sometimes they didn’t. His mom, Nina, a former beauty queen, knew her way around a pair of scissors, and to save money, she made George’s clothes and cut his hair, favoring the goofball bowl-cut look. His father was strict. That didn’t slow George down much, however. He’d get into trouble and get grounded, and then go do it all over again. And when his father told a risqué joke at a dinner party but could not bring himself to utter the dirty punch line, his son would immediately rise to the occasion. “I’d say, ‘Because of her tits!’ or some stupid thing, and the table would just explode laughing, with my dad kicking me under the table. But see, even at the age of six, I understood what to do to get a laugh.”

He lost his virginity at the age of 16 (“young, very young, too young”). Being a Catholic, he knew masturbation was a sin, but realizing even then that it was “crucial!” he did it anyway, after which, for absolution, he would fill his shoes with gravel and jump off the top of his bunk bed, only sometime later figuring out that jerking off wasn’t the worst of all possible sins: “If you look at that list of top ten sins, it’s not specifically listed. I mean, in general, there’s nothing about ‘Thou shalt not handle thine Johnson.’”

In school, his grades were good and he was a star athlete, basketball and baseball. At the age of 17, he tried out for the Cincinnati Reds, got freaked by an 80-mile-an-hour pitch aimed at his head, and ditched his dreams of going pro. Instead, he went to college, Northern Kentucky University, to study journalism, and went wild, drinking, chasing skirts, skipping classes and eventually dropping out. He returned home, took odd jobs, and even cut tobacco for a living (“a miserable job”) until the day that his aunt, the late, great singer Rosemary Clooney, and her husband, actor José Ferrer, asked if he wanted a small part in a horse-racing flick (*And They’re Off!*) Ferrer was shooting nearby. He saddled up and suddenly knew what he wanted to do with his life—something, in fact, he had been doing ever since his early dinner-table-comedian and Bell’s-palsy days.

“WE WERE AN ENTERTAINMENT FAMILY. YOU HAD TO BE ON. MY WHOLE FAMILY WAS LIKE A VAUDEVILLE ACT.”

It was 1982. In short order, he shoved \$300 into his pocket; packed up his crummy Monte Carlo; listened politely as his father told him he didn’t have what it takes to be an actor. “I said every cliché I could,” recalls Nick Clooney. “I said, ‘Just go back to school, George.’ Even after he got to California, we’d talk on the phone and I’d say, ‘Why don’t you just come on back. We’ll pay for school. You’ll have something to fall back on.’ I kept on saying that until the day he paused after my exhortation and said, ‘Pop, you know what? If I have something to fall back on, you know what I’ll do? I’ll fall back.’ That sure stopped me. I never said anything like that again.”

Clooney car-camped to Hollywood; partied like crazy, mainly booze, some coke and many quaaludes (“I thought quaaludes were the greatest drug ever made!”); went to auditions where, like most actors, he auditioned meekly, hat in hand; got some parts, *Sunset Beat*, *Street Hawk*, *Combat High*, nothings; watched as his alcoholic namesake uncle, Uncle George, died of lung cancer, muttering as he went down, “What a waste”; decided right then that if death was inevitable, he’d lead life on his own terms; got a recurring part on *The Facts of Life*; sometimes went to auditions with a dog as a prop, leading the casting people to say, “What the fuck?”

By the early Nineties, he was making \$400,000 a year appearing regularly on forgettable TV shows. Nice money, but not necessarily career-making work. In 1994, he was offered a part in a medical-drama pilot for tiny bucks. He took the tiny bucks, and soon the ratings for *ER* hit the 40-million-viewer mark. He was a TV superstar. Then, in 1998, Soderbergh directed him in *Out of Sight*, co-starring Jennifer Lopez. “At the time, we both knew we were getting our shot, and if we fucked it up, that was it,” says Soderbergh. “But while the movie didn’t make money, it was a creative success, and you can’t look at George in it and not go, ‘OK, that guy is a movie star.’” And soon enough he became so much more. He became the Last True Movie Star, the Last American Man, etc. Crazy.

The most important thing to know about Clooney’s past, however, is that from the beginning his parents raised him to behave a certain way, especially at his father’s many starring-role public appearances. “My sister and I never really loved doing those,” Clooney says one day. “You had to be on. It was show-business time. You were required to entertain. At seven years old, you had to get up onstage and say something. We were an entertainment family. Both my mom and I did commercials on my dad’s show. The whole family was like a vaudeville act. And there were times when I’d rather hang out with my friends and play baseball. And my sister just wanted to read. And my parents could be silently unhappy. And we could have these long drives to an event. But once we got out of the car,

it was show business, baby. You're on. It's like, 'Hey, hey!' and we're like, 'Yay!' and the whole family was smiling, and we'd get back in the car, and nobody would talk."

Manners were also deemed important. "At the dinner table," he goes on, "it was like, 'Don't chew with your mouth open, don't start eating until everybody's ready to eat, don't put your elbows on the table.' It's funny. Some of those rules I still have in my head." He pauses. "I remember my dad was just dicking around once, we were at a Reds game, I was putting too much mustard on my hot dog, and he said, 'Not too much, it'll give you a heart attack.' Even to this day, putting mustard on a hot dog, I'll think to myself, 'Uh-oh, I better watch it. I don't want to end up with a heart attack.'"

All of which goes a long way toward explaining the kind of man Clooney has become. If nothing else, he is the most refined of movie stars, never a salt-and-pepper strand of hair out of place. And he's also pretty perfect in lots of other ways. Let's not forget that.

Among his past girlfriends: Dedee Pfeiffer (Michelle's sister), Kelly Preston (with whom he got his beloved pig, Max), Talia Balsam (wife, m. 1989, d. 1993), Celine Balitran (French law student, 1996-1999), Krista Allen (actress, two Clooney breakups, 2004 and 2006), Lisa Snowdon (model, lasted five years, great bosom), Sarah Larson (Vegas cocktail waitress, 2008), Elisabetta Canalis (Italian model). And now there's Stacy Keibler, 32, a pro wrestler who has taken to tweeting daffy stuff like, "I'm in heaven" and "I'm smiling all day long."

Really, you'd think Clooney would put the kibosh on that kind of thing. But, no.

"She can do whatever she wants," he says. "I rarely tell anybody what they should be doing with their life."

So, he has no rules for his girls?

He snorts. "No. No rules. No sit-downs. No nothing."

So, anyway, will he ever get married?

More snorting. "I answered that question in 1997, having recently been divorced, and I really haven't addressed it since. It's one of those things, like many things in my life, that get picked up and repeated and are made to seem like new news."

OK. Fine. Be that way.

EINSTEIN CURLS UP next to him on the couch. Clooney strokes his head. He chose this particular cocker spaniel for two reasons: It had been abused and needed a better life, and it was already housebroken. "I'm horrible at training. I had two bulldogs before that would just sit on the floor in front of me

and shit. I was never good at smacking dogs or anything." Then, over the next little while, he adds considerably to his list of perfections. For one, the word "Johnson" always makes him laugh. "Always. 'He showed her his Johnson and she left.' You can actually say that in mixed company or on late-night TV." Farting, too, especially when he's hanging out with his pals. "We think it's one the funniest things in the history of mankind. Even the idea of a fart makes me laugh. Saying the word 'fart' makes me laugh. I have iFart on my phone. I have remote whoopee cushions. Farts. To me, there's nothing funnier."

What else makes the list? Him saying, "I'm the least metrosexual cat you've ever met. I've never had my fingernails or toenails done, and I've cut my own hair longer than other people have cut my hair." Him saying, "On an awards-show day, I can play basketball, go in, take a shower

these headaches where it feels like you're having a stroke, and for a short three-week period, I started to think, 'I may have to do something drastic about this.' You start to think in terms of, you don't want to leave a mess, so go in the garage, go in the car, start the engine. It seems like the nicest way to do it, but I never thought I'd get there. See, I was in a place where I was trying to figure out how to survive." The surgery helped, but he still gets those headaches, just not as bad.

And of course there is the movie star's loss of privacy, which is the one thing that Clooney says bothers him most about being a celebrity. But, really, there just has to be something more.

One day, Clooney's at his office, doing what he does best, being perfect. Let's say you're returning from using the bathroom where you have contemplated washing your hands but haven't. He sees you. The

first thing he says is, "Hey, I hope you washed your hands." How is that possible? Are there hidden cameras in the bathroom? How could he know that you didn't? Probably because, along with everything else, he divines truth.

But then the discussion begins to revolve around irrational fears and whether he's ever had any. He crosses his legs. "When I was young," he says, "I had this very irrational fear that I could just fucking do *something*. My father and I would climb up on a bridge, 200 feet to the ground, and I'd think, 'I could just jump. I could step out, and it would be all over.' And when that gets in your head, it's all you

can think of." He pauses, shifts, continues. "In a more practical sense, when I was 12, I would run the teleprompter for my dad when he was doing the news live and I kept thinking, 'I could just jump in front of the camera right now and go, 'Fuck, fuck, fuck!' and there's nothing anyone could do.' And then that's all I could think about, and I had to force myself not to do it. And then it became this thing I had with *everything*. I could stand up in church and yell obscenities. I could just get up and do this right now. And walls would come crashing down, and the whole world would shatter."

And there it is, just like that. Why Clooney is the way he is, and the price he has had to pay. When the fate of the world rests on your shoulders, perfection is its own price. It's like with the mustard-can-give-you-a-heart-attack thing: It's not true, of course, but somewhere, deep down, the belief persists. He may have had that angry period, but it did not last because it could not last, because if it did, the world would shatter. And he would be responsible. What a great guy this Clooney is. The world is in trouble. But fear not. He is on the case and looking out for us all.



OSCAR-BOUND? Clooney reaches new heights as a distant father to Shailene Woodley in *The Descendants*.

and put on a tux – it takes me three minutes to put on a tux – and be out the door in 15 minutes." Him being just so at ease with himself that in his company he puts you at ease, too. When he grins, you grin, and he does a lot of grinning, because he says a lot of things worth grinning about.

Is he a big spooner with girls?

Nods. "Unless I'm forking." Grins.

He's incredibly alpha, too, but in a good way. Let's say you want to play the kids' game of slap hands with him. He instantly assumes the first-slap position. He slaps with unnerving speed – but never so hard as to hurt, only to let you know. And when you finally do catch a break, he senses your lack of coordination and discreetly lets you get in a few whacks of your own. Nice. In fact, it's all so great. But it's this very greatness that can make you slightly nauseous and lead you to wonder if not hope that he had to pay some horrendous price for it all.

Certainly, he has suffered, most painfully after he injured his spine while making *Syriana* and starting blowing spinal fluid out his nose. "I was at a point where I thought, 'I can't exist like this. I can't actually live.' I was lying in a hospital bed with an IV in my arm, unable to move, having

THE GOOD WITCH

HOW ARTY, ETHEREAL FLORENCE WELCH
BECAME THE STEVIE NICKS
OF THE *TWILIGHT* GENERATION
BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

O

N A RECENT FALL EVENING, FLORENCE WELCH RUSHES INTO THE backroom of a downtown Manhattan restaurant to order a glass of red wine. "I've been looking forward to this all day," she says, cupping her delicate hands around the stem. Her appearance is one of dignity and order, like an efficient clerk in an independent bookshop: Her hair, which is the same color as a car's brake lights, is tied back in a loose bun, and she wears a pressed vintage blouse under a short black kimono. Soon, though, she cradles her head in her hands. "Oh, God, I performed at a hotel bar last

P H O T O G R A P H B Y N A D A V K A N D E R



night, and next thing I knew, I was in a round bath in the middle of someone's bedroom," she wails. "There wasn't any water in it, but I stayed there for a while: 'OK, this is where I'm going to stay for the next couple of hours.'" She rubs her temples. "I think I drank about 17 vodka martinis."

This isn't necessarily out of character for Welch, the 25-year-old British "choral chamber-pop" musician, as she describes herself, who has become a kind of Björk for the *Twilight* age in the past few years. Even Beyoncé is a fan, and has said that her new record is influenced by Welch's music. "I love that record," says Welch. "I've been listening to it, trying to figure out where she's talking about – hmm, maybe this guitar bit?" Onstage – alongside nine other musicians (including a harpist and three backing vocalists) that comprise Florence and the Machine – Welch projects the persona of an elegant and ethereal Romantic heroine. She sings about doomed love and beautiful death, drawing upon the same ghoulish tales that fascinated her as a schoolgirl (she loved Medici's frescoes of St. Agatha with her breasts cut off, or violent Greek myths about Prometheus getting his liver pecked out). On her new album, *Ceremonials*, the drama from her airy first album, *Lungs*, is intensified with heavier guitars and im-

of four years, a British magazine editor – when his name comes up, Welch's eyes fill with tears – or simply to the lifestyle of touring and its benders, though she says she didn't drink at all when she opened for U2 this summer: "It was like being a gladiator performing in the Colosseum on that tour, and I needed my energy." For the past three years, since Welch became successful, she's been on the road almost every month. In this whirlwind, she hasn't found time to move out of her mother's house in South London, and still lives in the room she's had since she was 13. "I just haven't had time to move out," she says, then pauses. "If I die still living at my mother's house, it will be terrible."

AS A CHILD, WELCH, THE eldest of three siblings, says she was always "attracted to the idea of the brokenhearted chanteuse. I'd be in one of my mum's nighties at age 10, with a wineglass full of orange juice, singing along to Billie Holiday." The first songs she wrote were about breakups – "Things like 'That's the last thing he gave me, a rose on the table, and it's dead. . . . The painting on the wall has fallen to the ground, and it's dead,'" she says.

in schoolbooks, and began dressing in purple dresses and black lipstick, "a mix of *Clueless* and *The Craft*." Within a couple of years, she moved on to Lauryn Hill and the Wu-Tang Clan ("I was a musical slut," she says), and then garage rock.

At 18, Welch fell in love for the first time with the rhythm guitarist for a "rootsy, Libertines-y, Stones-y" band. "No one at school wanted to date me, so I was head over heels in love when it finally happened," she says. "He drove me completely insane." Enrolled in art school ("I did a lot of drawings of puking up my insides or myself as a pine tree, pining"), she went to all of her boyfriend's gigs, dropping out of school to begin bartending at a pub for "art students and mental patients." She also began performing a few songs she wrote herself, like "Kiss With a Fist," at basement squats and open-mic nights. "I wouldn't call them shows – it was more like, 'There's a mic, I'm going to shout into it, it's three in the morning, there's bubble wrap everywhere. . . .'"

The transformation from neglected band girlfriend to superstar wasn't far off, though, when Welch began collaborating with Isabella Summers, a producer who used to baby-sit her cousin when she was a teenager. When they met again, says Summers, Welch dressed as "half hip-hop

"HANGOVERS ARE THE PERFECT STATE TO BE CREATIVE," SAYS A BLEARY-EYED WELCH. "NOTHING FEELS REAL."

agery that explicitly compares suicide to falling in love, as she talks about the pleasure Virginia Woolf experienced when she committed suicide by placing rocks in her pockets and walking into the deep.

During her downtime, Welch appears to be much more optimistic, though she's still a complicated figure, with heightened emotions that run from happy and self-deprecating to maudlin and anxious in the time it takes to finish a glass of wine. As she orders some "bits and bobs" (olives, sides of spinach and a kale salad), she replays some more of last night, which culminated in misplacing her phone and dislodging a tooth filling while eating a vegetable chip; she also almost set her room, at the Bowery Hotel, on fire after she left a lit candle flickering on a dresser table. "I definitely did the drunk cry last night – the one where you're not really crying, it's not even real, and you're the least attractive you could ever be," she says. "That's when you need your best female friend to spoon you and say, 'It's OK!'"

This behavior could be attributed to her recent breakup with her boyfriend

she says. "And obviously none of that had happened yet." As befits most overdramatic lasses, she dreamed of acting on Broadway and constantly bugged her parents for tickets to *Starlight Express* or *Chicago*. "You know how most kids are desperate to go to gigs as a teenager?" she asks. "Well, I was desperate to go to musicals."

Welch wrote plays in her bunk bed, concocting imaginary scenarios that often involved superpowers. "I spent a lot of time trying to jump off the top of my bunk bed with an umbrella, like Mary Poppins," she says. "Thump." She also played games with three kids who lived down the street. "We were all best friends, and wizards," she says. When she was 11, her mother, a Renaissance-art professor, left her father for the other family's dad. "It was pretty traumatic," she says. "We all moved in together. We thought they were anal, and they thought we were crazy thieves. But I can say now that it did help me in learning to roll with things, so that I can get along with anybody now, really."

At her new home, Welch's musical tastes quickly progressed from the Spice Girls ("I wanted to be Posh") to grunge and Green Day. She started a coven with her girlfriends, writing down their spells

girl in gold bikini tops with white denim shorts, and half Pippi Longstocking with sock/brogue combo and grungy tea dresses." They clicked instantly, though their method of writing was unconventional. For "Dog Days," they locked themselves in the studio, stood on chairs and listened to "Like a Prayer" on high volume, made a bunch of harp noises on a keyboard and tapped radiators for drum sounds. "We used to try to write a hit in half an hour, from scratch," says Summers.

A few years later, Welch happened upon Mairead Nash, one half of a female DJ duo well-connected in the London scene (she's credited with nicknaming Pete Doherty "Babyshambles"), in a nightclub bathroom. After Welch drunkenly regaled Nash with a version of Etta James' "Something's Got a Hold on Me," Nash gave her a booking at a Christmas party. From there, it was a short hop "from the toilets to the Brits," Welch has said. What do the old boyfriend and friends from her art-college days think about her breakout? "I wonder," she says, looking upward with a coy smile. "I don't know."

In 2008, after Welch spent a year playing small venues in London, her management sent her to Austin's SXSW, where

Contributing editor VANESSA GRIGORIAS wrote about Justin Bieber in RS 1125.



The next day, in the early afternoon, she spends some time folding her clothes – “Now that I’m single, if I’m left to my own devices, I can go on for hours putting things away.” Then she sets out to check out some flea shops in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood, after her assistant brings her some goop for her tooth (“Home fillings, all the fun of touring with Florence Welch,” she jokes good-naturedly, putting a hand to her cheek). She says she doesn’t mind losing her phone, really: “I think it’s good to lose things sometimes. Because if you find it again, it’s almost worth it, just for that feeling. And if you never lost anything, you’d never have that feeling.” Deep feelings, whether

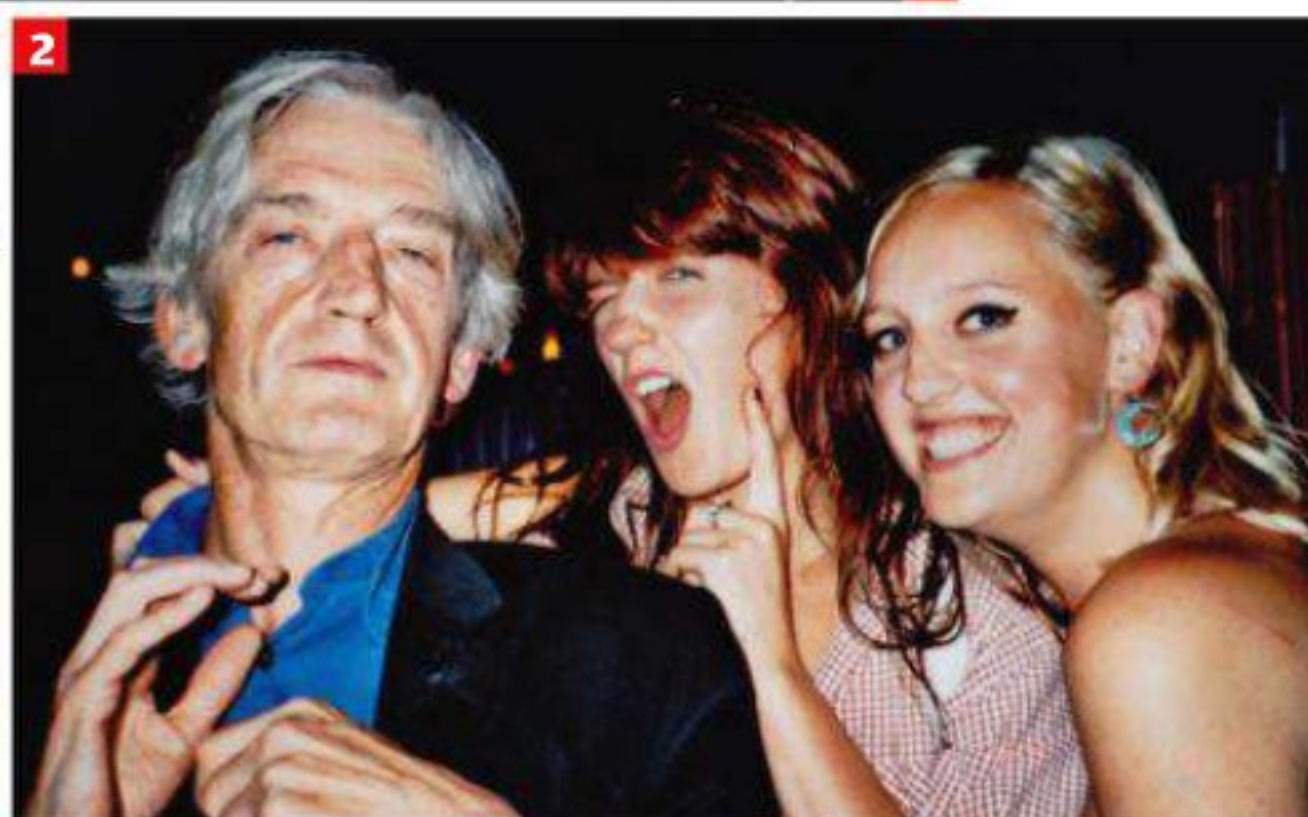
it’s the transcendence of watching a sunrise or finishing another bottle of wine, are what Welch is after, including the ones that come from love. “It’s a sick feeling, not the nicest feeling, of being ill and crazy, and driven to mania. I hope someday I can get to a stage where I feel comfort and the solidity of it. Being single now – well, it hasn’t been that long, and I don’t

know how I feel about it yet.”

At the market, Welch moves slowly around booths stuffed with clothing and jewelry, with the disciplined attitude of a serious shopper. She considers buying hats and dresses, always with this question in the back of her mind: “Does this make me look cool, or like Maid Marian? There’s quite a fine line.” After an hour, she decides upon a red bowler hat with a feather. “I’m really going through an OCD burgundy phase at the moment,” she says. “I’m always attracted to one color, so ‘this can go with that,’ and then I wake up one day and look in my closet: ‘Oh, no, I’ve done it again!’”

She digs into her pocketbook, but she seems not to have brought cash along, “and I can never keep a grip of my bank cards, so I’m always writing IOUs to everybody,” she says. A member of her entourage stops at an ATM before she heads downtown to the lumberjack-hipster hangout Freeman’s, outside of which she trails her hand along a piece of graffiti that says **THAT’S ALL THERE IS** on the wall. “I like when my restaurants have lyrics from the Strokes in them,” she says.

Welch has a flight to London at 5 a.m. tomorrow, and she’s decided she is going to make it an early night to rest up for it. Then she spots a platonic friend, rapidly going in for a wild embrace with her hands around his midsection. “Oh, my,” she says to him. “I was thinking I wasn’t going to go out and get drunk tonight – but now, I think I might!”



Florence, Minus Machine

(1) Welch performing an early gig, opening for Courtney Love in 2007. (2) With father Nick and sister Grace, circa 2006. (3) With ex-boyfriend Stuart Hammond earlier this year.



she played a buzzy show attended by Andrew VanWyngarden and Ben Goldwasser from MGMT. They offered her a spot opening for them on their European tour, for 30 euros a gig – “just enough for us and my three bandmates to split between us to buy booze,” she says. “Andrew and I would swap dresses. I have a lime-green catsuit of his, slit to the navel, that I wore to a festival.” Her hair was still her natural brown, but one night she and VanWyngarden went looking for a salon called Rock Hair in Paris. “I had no sleep, just some Valium and red wine, and Andrew wanted to get a mullet,” says Welch. “I got my hair colored red with a thick fringe. A while later, in a complete state, I tried to put it back to brown, but it just wouldn’t. My true self would just not come back out.”

In this garb, as a redheaded pre-Raphaelite heroine, Welch may sing about the enjoyment of letting go, of courting death. But offstage, she says, she’s “terrified of death.” She pauses. “There’s a lot that’s heavenly, hellish, pagan and reverential in my music, but the truth is that I think death is probably endless nothingness, disappearing into the void. And I don’t want that. The world is so exciting and vibrant.”

AFTER HER DINNER OF green vegetables and wine, Welch goes to sleep early – “I watched a few romantic movies on the television with a girlfriend, and we wailed to each other, ‘We’re never going to get married!’” She says that she carries a lot of guilt about not being on the track to marriage and children now, and not knowing if she wants a more traditional type of life. “As disorganized as I can be, the fact is that I’m a Virgo, and I’m a total perfectionist in my work,” she says. “I think a lot of my songs deal with a very feminine problem of wanting to be perfect, and yet feeling guilty all the time because you never achieve everything that you’re trying to do. So the child side of me says, ‘Fuck it, it doesn’t matter, go out for three days, you’ll never be able to do it all anyway.’” She sighs. “The truth is that even though I hate hangovers, there’s something special about them. You either have to do a gig, get a tattoo, get drunk again or write a song – that’s really the best cure. Hangovers are almost the perfect state to be creative, because you’re not really awake, and nothing feels real.”

THE PARTY — OF — THE RICH

How the Republicans abandoned the poor
and the middle class to pursue their relentless
agenda of tax cuts for the wealthiest one percent

BY TIM DICKINSON

THE NATION IS STILL RECOVERING from a crushing recession that sent unemployment hovering above nine percent for two straight years. The president, mindful of soaring deficits, is pushing bold action to shore up the nation's balance sheet. Cloaking himself in the language of class warfare, he calls on a hostile Congress to end wasteful tax breaks for the rich. "We're going to close the unproductive tax loopholes that allow some of the truly wealthy to avoid paying their fair share," he thunders to a crowd in Georgia. Such tax loop-

holes, he adds, "sometimes made it possible for millionaires to pay nothing, while a bus driver was paying 10 percent of his salary – and that's crazy."

Preacherlike, the president draws the crowd into a call-and-response. "Do you think the millionaire ought to pay more in taxes than the bus driver," he demands, "or less?"

The crowd, sounding every bit like the protesters from Occupy Wall Street, roars back: "MORE!"

The year was 1985. The president was Ronald Wilson Reagan.

ILLUSTRATION BY MATT MAHURIN



Today's Republican Party may revere Reagan as the patron saint of low taxation. But the party of Reagan – which understood that higher taxes on the rich are sometimes required to cure ruinous deficits – is dead and gone. Instead, the modern GOP has undergone a radical transformation, reorganizing itself around a grotesque proposition: that the wealthy should grow wealthier still, whatever the consequences for the rest of us.

Modern-day Republicans have become, quite simply, the Party of the One Percent – the Party of the Rich.

"The Republican Party has totally abdicated its job in our democracy, which is to act as the guardian of fiscal discipline and responsibility," says David Stockman, who served as budget director under Reagan. "They're on an anti-tax jihad – one that benefits the prosperous classes."

The staggering economic inequality that has led Americans across the country to take to the streets in protest is no accident. It has been fueled to a large extent by the GOP's all-out war on behalf of the rich. Since Republicans rededicated themselves to slashing taxes for the wealthy in 1997, the average annual income of the 400 richest Americans has more than tripled, to \$345 million – while their share of the tax burden has plunged by 40 percent. Today, a billionaire in the top 400 pays less than 17 percent of his income in taxes – five percentage points less than a bus driver earning \$26,000 a year. "Most Americans got none of the growth of the preceding dozen years," says Joseph

and endorsing a tax amnesty for big corporations that have hidden billions in profits in offshore tax havens. They also wrecked the nation's credit rating by rejecting a debt-ceiling deal that would have slashed future deficits by \$4 trillion – simply because one-quarter of the money would have come from closing tax loopholes on the rich.

The intransigence over the debt ceiling enraged Republican stalwarts. George Voinovich, the former GOP senator from Ohio, likens his party's new guard to arsonists whose attitude is: "We're going to get what we want or the country can go to hell." Even an architect of the Bush tax cuts, economist Glenn Hubbard, tells *ROLLING STONE* that there should have been a "revenue contribution" to the debt-ceiling deal, "structured to fall mainly on the well-to-do." Instead, the GOP strong-armed America into sacrificing \$1 trillion in vital government services – including education, health care and defense – all to safeguard tax breaks for oil companies, yacht owners and hedge-fund managers. The party's leaders were triumphant: Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell even bragged that America's creditworthiness had been a "hostage that's worth ransoming."

It's the kind of thinking that only money can buy. "It's a vicious circle," says Stiglitz. "The rich are using their money to secure tax provisions to let them get richer still. Rather than investing in new technology or R&D, the rich get a better return by investing in Washington."

"The Republican Party has totally abdicated its job as the guardian of fiscal discipline," says David Stockman, who served as Reagan's budget director. "They're on an anti-tax jihad – one that benefits the prosperous classes."

Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize-winning economist. "All the gains went to the top percentage points."

The GOP campaign to aid the wealthy has left America unable to raise the money needed to pay its bills. "The Republican Party went on a tax-cutting rampage and a spending spree," says Rhode Island governor and former GOP senator Lincoln Chafee, pointing to two deficit-financed wars and an unpaid-for prescription-drug entitlement. "It tanked the economy." Tax receipts as a percent of the total economy have fallen to levels not seen since before the Korean War – nearly 20 percent below the historical average. "Taxes are ridiculously low!" says Bruce Bartlett, an architect of Reagan's 1981 tax cut. "And yet the mantra of the Republican Party is 'Tax cuts raise growth.' So – where's the fucking growth?"

Republicans talk about job creation, about preserving family farms and defending small businesses, and reforming Medicare and Social Security. But almost without exception, every proposal put forth by GOP lawmakers and presidential candidates is intended to preserve or expand tax privileges for the wealthiest Americans. And most of their plans, which are presented as common-sense measures that will aid all Americans, would actually result in higher taxes for middle-class taxpayers and the poor. With 14 million Americans out of work, and with one in seven families turning to food stamps simply to feed their children, Republicans have responded to the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression by slashing inheritance taxes, extending the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires,

IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE TODAY, BUT TAXING THE rich wasn't always a major flash point of American political life. From the end of World War II to the eve of the Reagan administration, the parties fought over social spending – Democrats pushing for more, Republicans demanding less. But once the budget was fixed, both parties saw taxes as an otherwise uninteresting mechanism to raise the money required to pay the bills. Eisenhower, Nixon and Ford each fought for *higher* taxes, while the biggest tax cut was secured by John F. Kennedy, whose across-the-board tax reductions were actually opposed by the majority of Republicans in the House. The distribution of the tax burden wasn't really up for debate: Even after the Kennedy cuts, the top tax rate stood at 70 percent – double its current level. Steeply progressive taxation paid for the postwar investments in infrastructure, science and education that enabled the average American family to get ahead.

That only changed in the late 1970s, when high inflation drove up wages and pushed the middle class into higher tax brackets. Harnessing the widespread anger, Reagan put it to work on behalf of the rich. In a move that GOP Majority Leader Howard Baker called a "riverboat gamble," Reagan sold the country on an "across-the-board" tax cut that brought the top rate down to 50 percent. According to supply-side economists, the wealthy would use their tax break to spur investment, and the economy would boom. And if it didn't – well, to Reagan's cadre of small-government conservatives, the resulting red ink could be a win-win. "We started talking about just cutting taxes and saying, 'Screw the deficit,'" Bartlett recalls. "We had this idea that if you lowered revenues, the concern about the deficit would be channeled into spending cuts."

Contributing editor TIM DICKINSON profiled Fox News chief Roger Ailes in RS 1132.

It was the birth of what is now known as “Starve the Beast” – a conscious strategy by conservatives to force cuts in federal spending by bankrupting the country. As conceived by the right-wing intellectual Irving Kristol in 1980, the plan called for Republicans to create a “fiscal problem” by slashing taxes – and then foist the pain of reimposing fiscal discipline onto future Democratic administrations who, in Kristol’s words, would be forced to “tidy up afterward.”

There was only one problem: The Reagan tax cuts spiked the federal deficit to a dangerous level, even as the country remained mired in a deep recession. Republican leaders in Congress immediately moved to reverse themselves and feed the beast. “It was not a Democrat who led the effort in 1982 to undo about a third of the Reagan tax cuts,” recalls Robert Greenstein, president of the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. “It was *Bob Dole*.” Even Reagan embraced the tax hike, Stockman says, “because he believed that, at some point, you have to pay the bills.”

For the remainder of his time in office, Reagan repeatedly raised taxes to bring down unwieldy deficits. In 1983, he hiked gas and payroll taxes. In 1984, he raised revenue by closing tax loopholes for businesses. The tax reform of 1986 lowered the top rate for the wealthy to just 28 percent – but that cut for high earners was paid for by closing tax loopholes that resulted in the largest corporate tax hike in history. Reagan also raised revenues by abolishing special favors for the investor class: He boosted taxes on capital gains by 40 percent to align them with the taxes paid on wages. Today, Reagan may be lionized as a tax abolitionist, says Alan Simpson, a former Republican senator and friend of the president, but that’s not true to his record. “Reagan raised taxes 11 times in eight years!”

But Reagan wound up sowing the seed of our current gridlock when he gave his blessing to what Simpson calls a “nefarious organization” – Americans for Tax Reform. Headed by Grover Norquist, a man Stockman blasts as a “fiscal terrorist,” the group originally set out to prevent Congress from backsliding on the 1986 tax reforms. But Norquist’s instrument for enforcement – an anti-tax pledge signed by GOP lawmakers – quickly evolved into a powerful weapon designed to shift the tax burden away from the rich. George H.W. Bush won the GOP presidential nomination in 1988 in large part because he signed Norquist’s “no taxes” pledge. Once in office, however, Bush moved to bring down the soaring federal deficit by hiking the top tax rate to 31 percent and adding surtaxes for yachts, jets and luxury sedans. “He had courage to take action when we needed it,” says Paul O’Neill, who served as Treasury secretary under George W. Bush.

The tax hike helped the economy – and many credit it with setting up the great economic expansion of the 1990s. But it cost Bush his job in the 1992 election – a defeat that only served to strengthen Norquist’s standing among GOP insurgents. “The story of Bush losing,” Norquist says now, “is a reminder to politicians that this is a pledge you don’t break.” What was once just another campaign promise, rejected by a fiscal conservative like Bob Dole, was transformed into a political blood oath – a litmus test of true Republicanism that few candidates dare refuse.

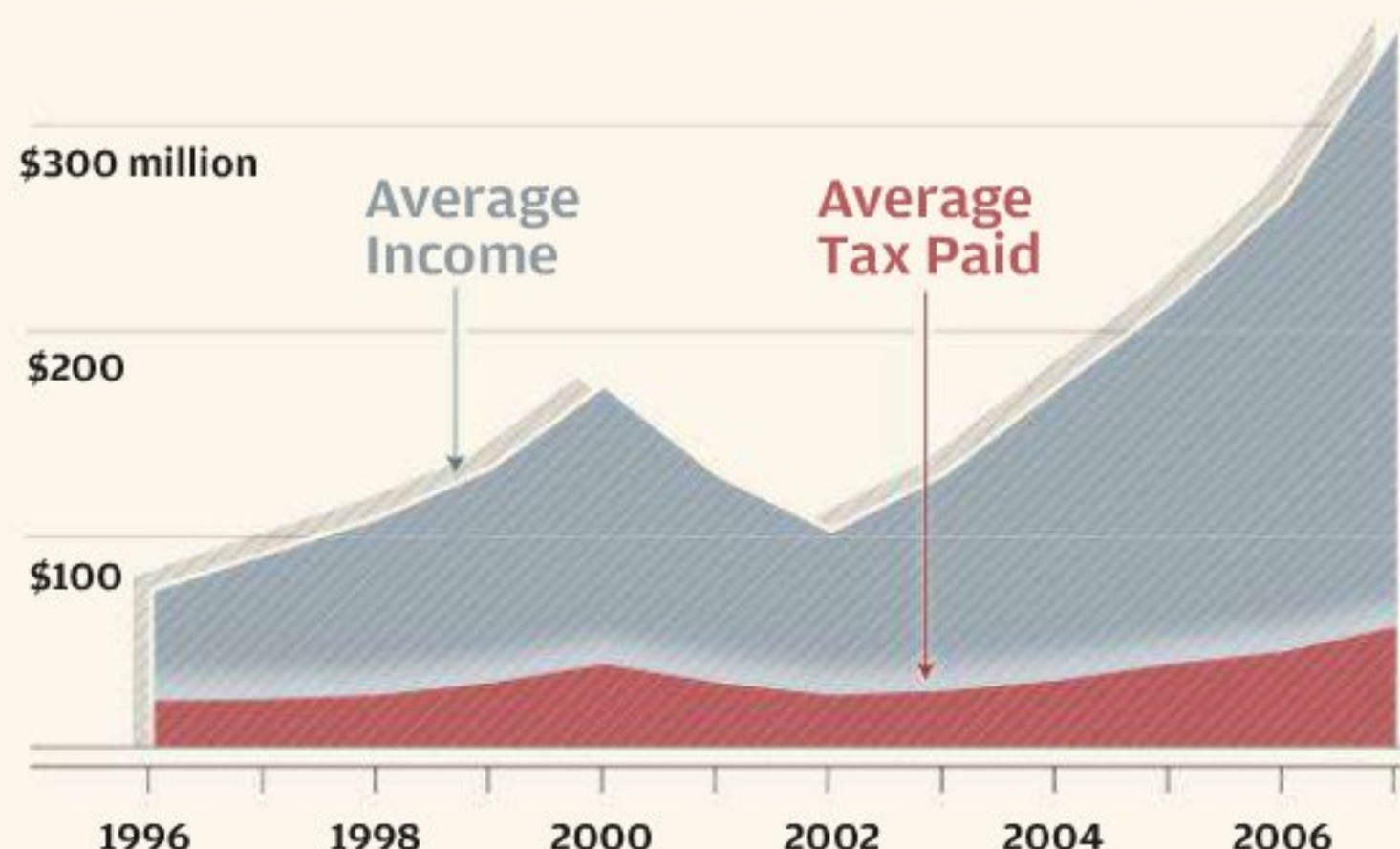
AFTER TAKING OFFICE, CLINTON IMMEDIATELY seized the mantle of fiscal discipline from Republicans. Rather than simply trimming the federal deficit, as his GOP predecessors had done, he set out to balance the budget and begin paying down the national debt. To do so, he hiked the top tax bracket to nearly 40 percent and boosted the corporate tax rate to 35 percent. “It cost him both hous-

es of Congress in the 1994 midterm elections,” says Chafee, the former GOP senator. “But taming the deficit led to the best economy America’s ever had.” Following the tax hikes of 1993, the economy grew at a brisk clip of 3.2 percent, creating more than 11 million jobs. Average wages ticked up, and stocks soared by 78 percent. By the spring of 1997, the federal budget was headed into the black.

But Newt Gingrich and the anti-tax revolutionaries who seized control of Congress in 1994 responded by going for the Full Norquist. In a stunning departure from America’s long-standing tax policy, Republicans moved to eliminate taxes on investment income and to abolish the inheritance tax. Under the final plan they enacted, capital gains taxes were sliced to 20 percent. Far from creating an across-the-board benefit, 62 cents of every tax dollar cut went directly to the top one percent of income earners. “The capital gains cut alone gave the top 400 taxpayers a bigger tax cut than all the Bush tax cuts combined,” says David Cay Johnston, the Pulitzer Prize-winning

The 400 Richest

Thanks to the GOP, a tiny handful of wealthy Americans has fared extraordinarily well since 1997. Their average income has soared – but their tax burden has barely budged



author of *Perfectly Legal: The Covert Campaign to Rig Our Tax System to Benefit the Super Rich – and Cheat Everybody Else*.

The cuts also juiced irrational exuberance on Wall Street. Giving a huge tax advantage to investment income inflated the dot-com bubble, observed Stiglitz, “by making speculation more attractive.” And by eliminating capital gains taxes on home sales, the cuts fueled the housing bubble: A study by the Federal Reserve estimated that the tax giveaways boosted housing transactions by 17 percent through 2007.

The most revealing aspect of the tax cuts, however, came from a simple mistake. In a major blow to the inheritance tax – America’s most progressive form of taxation – the GOP cuts nearly doubled the amount that the rich could pass on to their heirs tax-free. From now on, the first \$1 million would be exempt from federal taxes – unless your estate was worth more than \$17 million. In those rare cases, the superwealthy would have to pay taxes on their entire inheritance.

Then something strange happened. Due to a “drafting error,” the final bill failed to include the exception for the superwealthy. Everyone in both parties agreed that it had been a mistake. But instead of fixing the error, Republicans blocked a pro forma correction to the law – meaning that even the wealthiest estates would pay no taxes on the first \$1 million. The move

effectively secured an \$880 million tax cut for the rich – one that Congress never intended, and never voted for. Ari Fleischner, the then-spokesman for Rep. Bill Archer of the House Ways and Means Committee, exulted over the undemocratic tax cut for the wealthy. “When a mistake works *against* the government and *for* the taxpayers,” he explained, “we’re in no rush to correct it.”

Republicans, abetted by conservative Democrats, passed the tax cuts with a veto-proof majority, and Clinton signed them into law. But for the remainder of his term, Clinton repeatedly blocked Republican demands for further cuts. “He vetoed one tax cut after another,” says Robert McIntyre, director of Citizens for Tax Justice. In 1999, in a triumph for fiscal sanity, Clinton rejected a massive \$792 billion cut to inheritance and investment taxes. The mood during the veto ceremony in the Rose Garden was festive. A five-piece band played “Summertime,” and the living was easy. Unemployment stood at 4.2 percent, and stocks were booming. “Our hard-won prosperity gives us the chance to invest our surplus to meet the long-term challenges of America,” Clinton declared. The Republican tax cuts, he warned with eerie prescience, would return America to a period of “deficit upon deficit” that culminated in “the worst recession since the Great Depression.”

Then came the election of George W. Bush, the first president of the Party of the Rich.

most notorious cases, GE filed for a \$3 billion tax rebate in 2009, despite boasting profits of more than \$14 billion.

But Bush wasn’t content to simply make the world safe for corporate tax evaders: He also pushed to deliver \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthiest individuals. On paper, at least, the federal government looked like it would soon be rolling in cash. Assuming the economy continued to grow as it had under Clinton, the Congressional Budget Office forecast a federal surplus of \$5.6 *trillion* by 2011. Nearly half that bounty was already spoken for – the government needed some \$3 trillion to shore up Social Security and Medicare – but that still left \$2 trillion to play with.

Still, those numbers were only a projection. “It’s certainly not money in the bank,” Fed chairman Alan Greenspan warned incoming Treasury Secretary O’Neill over breakfast at the Federal Reserve. Yet there was no such note of caution in the White House. The month after Bush took office, the president’s then-budget director, Mitch Daniels, suggested in an internal memo that \$5.6 trillion was likely too small a figure. Daniels concluded that Bush’s plan was “so fiscally conservative” that even after cutting \$1.6 trillion in taxes, fixing Social Security and setting aside \$900 billion in a contingency fund, the government would still have enough money left over to retire \$2 trillion in debt.

“Everybody for a good while accepted that the surpluses were real,” insists Daniels, now the governor of Indiana. When

The Republican tax cuts, Clinton warned with eerie prescience a decade ago, would return America to a period of “deficit upon deficit” that culminated in “the worst recession since the Great Depression.”

WITHIN MONTHS OF TAKING OFFICE, Bush delivered a tax break to the rich that trumps anything he accomplished through the actual tax code. “The most important thing the Bush administration did in the whole area of taxes,” says Johnston, “was to kill tax harmonization.”

“Tax harmonization” was economic jargon for a joint project by the world’s developed countries to shut down offshore tax havens in places like the Cayman Islands. At the time, such illicit havens were costing U.S. taxpayers \$70 billion a year. For Republicans, going after big-time tax evaders should have been as American as apple pie. As Reagan once said of such cheats: “When they do not pay their taxes, someone else does – you and me.”

But for Bush and other leaders of the Party of the Rich, blocking corporations from hiding their money overseas wasn’t an act of patriotism – it was tyranny. Rep. Dick Armey, the GOP majority leader, railed against tax harmonization as an effort to create a “global network of tax police.” One of Bush’s biggest donors, Enron, was using a network of nearly 900 offshore tax hideaways to pay no corporate taxes – while reporting massive profits that later turned out to be fraudulent. In one of his first acts as president, Bush “basically vetoed the initiative,” says Stiglitz.

The veto spurred a cavalcade of corporations – including stalwart American firms like Stanley Works – to pursue phony “headquarters” in Bermuda and other lax-tax nations. The move not only encouraged some of the world’s richest companies to avoid paying any U.S. taxes, it let them book overseas “expenses” that qualified them for lucrative tax *deductions*. In one of the

pressed, however, he also concedes that by the time Bush took office, “the economy was already unraveling.” Indeed, a wave of layoffs at the end of 2000 prompted Dick Cheney to warn, “We may well be on the front edge of a recession here.”

The conflicting forecasts – one of sunshine and surplus, the other of gloom and contraction – should have set off alarm bells in the White House. But instead of rethinking the prudence of its massive giveaway to the rich, the Bush team dreamed up a new rationale for cutting taxes: to provide a needed jolt to the economy. “It’s a fair thing to say that the stimulus argument was added in the spring of ’01, when it had not been there before,” Daniels says.

The stimulus argument was lousy economics. The previous two decades, after all, had demonstrated that “trickle-down” tax cuts don’t juice the economy – they create bubbles and balloon deficits. Proponents pointed to Reagan’s original tax cut in 1981, claiming it had spurred economic growth. But that is nothing more than “urban legend,” Stockman says. The economy “did recover after 1982,” he says, “but mainly because the Federal Reserve defeated inflation.”

In fact, Stockman insists, Bush’s tax cuts for the rich represent a bastardization of Reaganism. “The Republican Party originally said that prosperity comes from the private sector,” he says. “But today’s Republicans have become Chamber of Commerce Keynesians – using tax policy as a way of stimulating, boosting, prodding the economy.” The Party of the Rich, in essence, was offering up a twisted version of New Deal policies that laissez-faire Republicans like Reagan had long opposed.

Spinning the tax giveaways as a stimulus plan did serve one useful function: It helped obscure the true purpose of the Bush

tax plan. In an internal memo written just days after the inauguration, O'Neill advised Bush that he had a "great opportunity" for quick action on his tax cuts if he framed the choice for Congress as *tax cut vs. recession*. "We can get this argument on our ground," O'Neill wrote, "and stop the drumbeat about a tax cut for the rich."

WITH NO PATIENCE FOR THE SPECIFICS of tax policy, Bush deputized Vice President Dick Cheney to push through his tax cut for the rich. Once a deficit hawk who confessed that he was "not convinced that the Reagan tax cuts worked," Cheney had emerged from his tenure as CEO of Halliburton as a leading advocate for rewarding big corporations and

their executives – even as GOP moderates warned that Bush's tax cut would foreclose needed investments in education and infrastructure. "The vice president had no interest in what I had to say," recalls Chafee. "He ran the show right from the beginning, and he suffered no compromise."

As the economy worsened, even the president's Treasury secretary grew concerned about the tax cuts. O'Neill pushed Bush to include a trigger mechanism that would rein in the cuts if the projected surpluses failed to materialize. "The trigger was a good idea – having the foresight that if things turned bad, we wouldn't have to reverse course in a difficult time," O'Neill says now. "But there was never any serious interest in it" from the Bush administration.

To Chafee, the opposition to a trigger mechanism seemed to offer a clue about the real goal of the tax cuts: They were

The Billionaires' Best Friend

How Grover Norquist hijacked the GOP on behalf of the rich

GROVER NORQUIST HAS never held elected office. He's not a political appointee or a congressional staffer, and few voters know his name. Yet this anti-tax lobbyist wields immense power over the Republican Party, enforcing a hard-line position that compels the GOP to protect tax breaks for the rich and billions in federal subsidies for America's wealthiest corporations. "It all comes from a single guy," says Alan Simpson, the former Republican senator. So how does Norquist do it?

Norquist's influence over the GOP began in 1985, when Ronald Reagan tapped the little-known staffer at the Chamber of Commerce to head up Americans for Tax Reform, a pressure group organized to push a comprehensive tax package through Congress. With backing from the Chamber, Norquist – a Harvard MBA and former head of the College Republicans – challenged GOP candidates to take a two-part pledge: that they would never raise taxes, and that they would only close tax loopholes if the additional revenue was used to pay for further tax cuts. Before long, he had 102 congressmen and 16 senators signed up.

Over the past 25 years, Norquist has received funding from many of America's wealthiest corporations, including Philip Morris, Pfizer and Microsoft. To build a farm team of anti-tax conservatives, Norquist shrewdly took the pledge to state legislatures across the country, pressuring up-and-



Norquist with Reagan in 1985

coming Republicans to make it a core issue before they're called up to the big leagues. "We're branding the whole party that way," Norquist says. "The people who are going to be running for Congress in 10 or 20 years are coming out of state legislatures with a history with the pledge."

Norquist also built the anti-tax pledge into the DNA of the GOP by hosting weekly Wednesday meetings that enable activist groups representing everyone from gun nuts to home-schoolers to mix with top business lobbyists and conservative officials. The meetings, which began shortly after Bill Clinton was elected, turned Norquist into the Republican Party's foremost power broker – and gave him a forum to enforce the no-new-taxes pledge as the centerpiece of the GOP's strategy. "The tax issue," he says, "is the one thing everyone agrees on."

Norquist cemented his influence by forging an early alliance with Karl

Rove and setting himself up as a gatekeeper to George W. Bush's inner circle. Then, after Obama was elected, this ultimate Washington insider positioned himself as a leader of the anti-establishment Tea Party, complete with financial support from the billionaire Koch brothers. "These Tea Party people, in effect, take their orders from him," says Bruce Bartlett, an architect of the Reagan tax cuts. "He decides: This is a permissible tax action, or this is not a permissible tax action. And of course, anything that cuts taxes is per se OK."

Today, GOP politicians who have signed Norquist's anti-tax pledge include every top Republican running for president, 13 governors, 1,300 state lawmakers, 40 of the 47 Republicans in the Senate, and 236 of the 242 Republicans in the House. What's more, the GOP's Tea Party foot soldiers are marshaled by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor – a veteran of Norquist's farm team, who first signed the pledge as an ambitious member of the Virginia legislature. Under Cantor's leadership, Norquist's anti-tax pledge was directly responsible for last summer's debt-ceiling standoff that wrecked the nation's credit rating by leading the nation to the brink of default. "Congress was willing to cause severe economic damage to the entire population," marvels Paul O'Neill, Bush's former Treasury secretary, "simply because they were slaves to an idiot's idea of how the world works." **T.D.**

PARTY OF THE RICH

designed not to boost the economy, but to force the kind of spending cuts championed by Grover Norquist and other small-government activists. His suspicion that the starve-the-beast crowd was driving the cuts was confirmed, he says, by a conversation he had while walking the Senate corridors with Trent Lott, then the GOP majority leader.

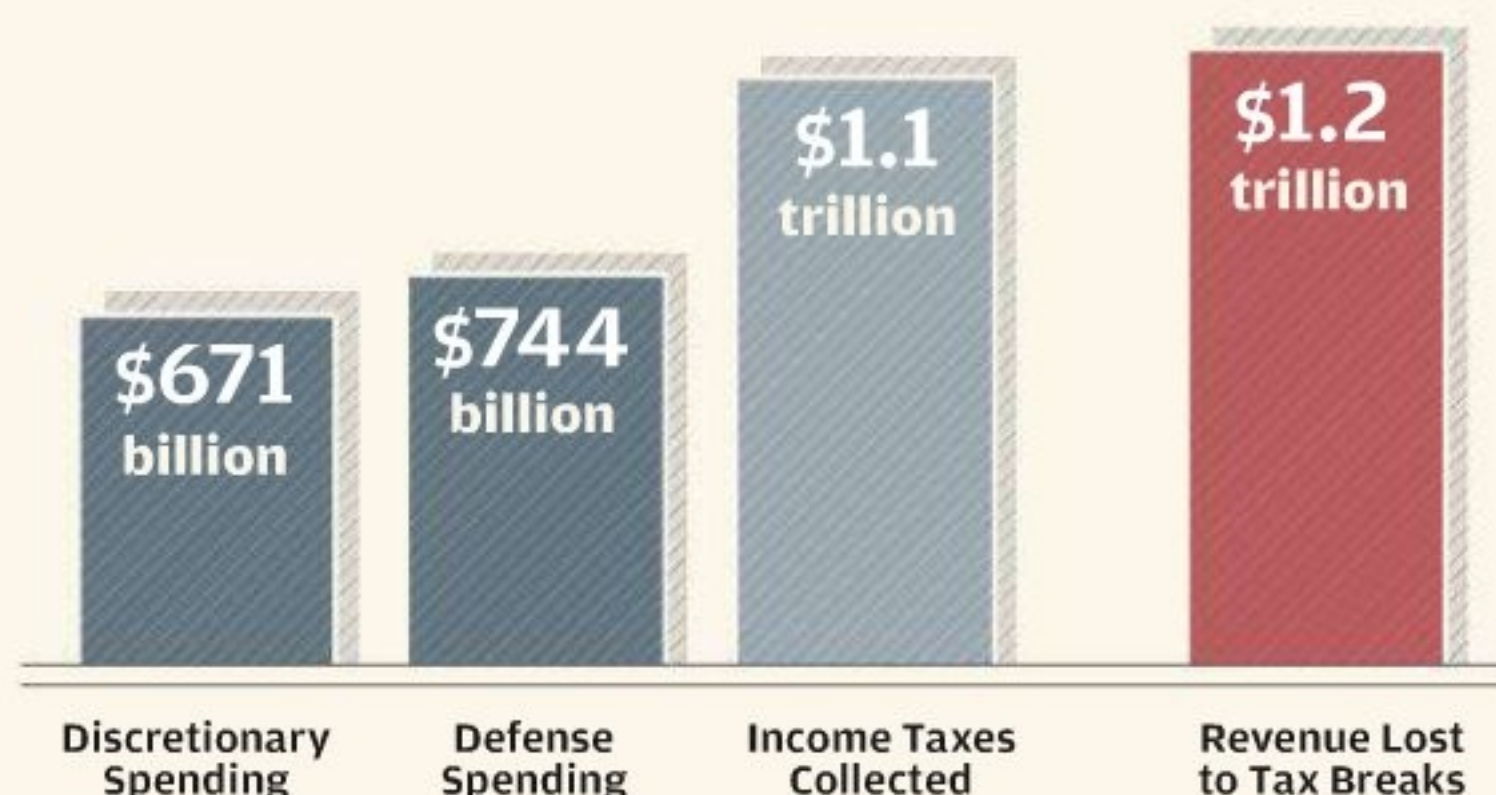
"What's going on here?" Chafee asked. Why not safeguard the economy by adopting a trigger mechanism?

Lott turned to Chafee. "We're going to strangle the spending," he said.

On the stump, Bush hyped the benefits of his plan by emphasizing how much in taxes it would save a single waitress. But the real action was at the top rung of the income ladder. Over 10 years, the bottom fifth of income earners could expect to pocket an extra \$744. That waitress might be left with enough cash to change out the clutch on her Corolla. The top one percent, meanwhile, would receive more than \$340,000 on average – enough to buy his and hers Bentleys.

Busting the Budget

Tax breaks not only cost the federal government far more than all discretionary and defense spending – they even exceed the annual income taxes collected from individuals



To mask such glaring inequality, Republicans inaugurated the tax cut with an across-the-board rebate. The waitress would get a \$300 check, along with everyone else from Warren Buffett on down. But in reality, the tax cuts were backloaded with benefits for the wealthy. In the first year of the deal, the top one percent would pocket just seven percent of the tax cuts – but by the time the cuts were set to expire in 2010, the rich would be reaping more than half of the windfall. What's more, the cuts were nefariously designed so that small-business owners and upper-middle-class professionals – primarily those earning between \$200,000 and \$500,000 a year – would see as much as three-quarters of their tax break eroded by the Alternative Minimum Tax, a levy Congress originally intended to keep rich people from cheating on their taxes.

Every year since the Bush tax cuts were approved, Congress has passed a multibillion "patch" to prevent this politically potent group of professionals from being denied their tax breaks. But at the time, Cheney used the money "saved" by the AMT claw-back to finance another favor exclusively for the rich: a series of cuts to the estate tax culminating in a one-year abolition, set to take effect in 2010. Rejecting a less costly bargain proposed by Democrats that would have provided a permanent escape from estate taxes for all but the richest of the rich, Re-

publicans instead demanded a more expensive plan catering to the wealthiest 0.25 percent of all estates.

In May 2001, Republicans in the House voted in lock step to approve the Bush tax cuts, which cleared the Senate with the support of 45 Republicans and 12 conservative Democrats.

But then reality intervened. The bursting of the dot-com bubble, followed by the attacks of September 11th, tipped the economy headlong into recession. Rather than reversing course, however, Republicans rallied around another tax giveaway for the rich. That October, a bill passed by the House – and endorsed by Bush – not only called for eliminating a law requiring that tax-dodging corporations pay at least *something* in taxes, it ordered rebate checks to be cut to corporate giants for their past taxes. Under the bill, 16 companies of the Fortune 500 would have each received \$100 million or more – including \$1.4 billion for IBM, \$671 million for GE and \$254 million for Enron. Democrats in the Senate ultimately sank the bill, producing a stimulus package that extended unemployment benefits for the middle class and awarded tax incentives to corporations for new investments.

But Republicans kept their eyes on the prize. The following year, after the GOP regained control of the Senate and expanded its majority in the House, Cheney immediately pushed forward with an even deeper tax cut for the wealthy that O'Neill today describes as "an atrocity."

"We won the midterms," the vice president told O'Neill at the time. "This is our due."

BY THAT POINT, ANY ECONOMIC rationale for cutting taxes had vanished. September 11th, the recession and the 2001 tax cuts had plunged the nation \$158 billion into the red. The mirage of the \$5.6 trillion surplus had vanished – replaced with a forecast that America would rack up some \$3 trillion in debt by 2012. But rather than put the brakes on tax cuts, as a trigger mechanism might have done, Cheney was determined to *accelerate* them, so the rich would get their money even sooner. To further reward the wealthiest, Cheney also wanted to slash taxes on capital gains and corporate dividends, with half of the money going to the top one percent.

To secure the new tax cuts, however, Cheney would first have to overcome opposition not only from Alan Greenspan, but from some of Bush's top advisers. The Fed chair had personally presented Cheney with a 20-page econometric analysis showing that soaring deficits caused by the tax cuts would sink long-term growth. Instead of communicating Greenspan's alarm to Bush, Cheney tasked a deputy named Cesar Conda to draft a memo disputing the study. Conda, a former tax lobbyist, blithely dismissed the projections of the Fed's senior economist as "completely wrong."

In November 2002, at a meeting in the White House, the president and his top economic advisers packed tightly around a mahogany table in the Roosevelt Room. With the administration's own forecasts showing that the economy had already regained its footing, one after another of Bush's deputies sounded the alarm about the dangers of a new tax cut. "This burns a big hole in the budget," deputy chief of staff Josh Bolten told the president. "The budget hole is getting deeper," added Daniels, "and we are projecting deficits all the way to the end of your second term." O'Neill warned the president that a "tax cut that benefits mostly wealthy investors" could imperil the budding prosperity. "With the economy already improving, this could cause an unnecessary boost," he said. "That's how you get a bubble." Entertaining the chorus of doubters, Bush himself voiced

qualms about more cuts for the rich. "Won't the top-rate people benefit the most?" he asked. "Didn't we already give them a break at the top?"

But Cheney was having none of it. When O'Neill warned Bush that America was headed for a "fiscal crisis," the vice president, sitting at the Treasury secretary's right elbow, dismissed him midsentence by citing the ultimate champion of Republican tax cuts: "Ronald Reagan proved that deficits don't matter, Paul."

A true student of Reagan would have understood that 2002 was the moment for a tax *increase*. When his 1981 tax cut overshoot the mark, Reagan had put aside ideology and raised taxes, putting the needs of the country above the desires of the wealthy. Bush's father had also raised taxes to avoid passing massive deficits on to future generations. Moreover, the Bush administration had already committed the country to a costly war in Afghanistan, and was on the brink of invading Iraq. Historically, Republican and Democratic administrations alike had met the financial burdens of war by raising taxes. But this was a new Republican Party, one determined to aid the rich even as it sent the military budget soaring. As House Majority Leader Tom DeLay would soon declare, "Nothing is more important in the face of a war than cutting taxes."

After the meeting, Cheney set out to remove anyone who stood in the way of the new tax giveaway. He phoned O'Neill and demanded the Treasury secretary's resignation. He also dispensed with economic adviser Larry Lindsey, whose frank assessment of the possible costs of the Iraq War had threatened to derail the tax cut.

fell by almost 60 percent. The move not only fueled speculation of Wall Street, it further widened the considerable gap between rich and poor. "It was a very destructive combination to have a national economic policy that stimulated debt-financed capital gains and then taxed the windfall at the lowest rate imaginable," says Stockman. "That contributed, clearly, to the growing imbalance in household income and wealth."

But Republicans didn't stop there. The following year, they passed the little-noticed American Jobs Creation Act. Named in the same Orwellian fashion as Bush's "Clear Skies" and "Healthy Forests" initiatives, the 2004 law allowed corporations to bring home billions in profits they had stockpiled in offshore tax havens – the very flight of capital that Bush had blessed by torpedoing tax harmonization three years earlier. Under the tax amnesty, corporations repatriated \$300 billion in profits they had stashed offshore. But instead of paying the nominal corporate tax rate of 35 percent, they were taxed at just 5.25 percent.

The title of the bill notwithstanding, corporations invested almost none of their windfall in new factories or other measures to create the 500,000 jobs that Republicans had promised. In fact, many companies that received the biggest tax break actually *slashed* jobs. Hewlett-Packard laid off 14,500 workers – one pink slip for every \$1 million in profits it shipped back home from overseas. All told, according to an analysis by the National Bureau of Economic Research, up to 92 percent of the "jobs creation" money was handed out to top executives and shareholders in a frenzy of dividend payments and stock buybacks. And thanks to the GOP's cut on investment income the previ-

Under the second round of Bush's tax cuts, half of the money went to the top one percent. Those making \$10 million a year pocketed \$1 million a year – twice their haul from the earlier cuts, and every cent of it borrowed.

Budget-conscious Republicans in Congress who opposed the tax cuts could not be disposed of – but they could be strong-armed. Voinovich and Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine, who refused to go along with cuts of more than \$350 billion, were summoned to the White House for a meeting with Bush and Cheney. "The president wanted nearly a trillion dollars when he started with us," recalls Voinovich. "They were working on us: We need more, we need more." The senators held out for a smaller bill – though in hindsight, Voinovich says, there shouldn't have been any tax cuts. "Just think where we'd be if we'd gone along with what the president wanted," he says, laughing bitterly. "Where would we be today? Oh, my God."

In the end, Cheney's voice was the only one that mattered. In April 2003, when the bill reached the floor, the Senate deadlocked 50-50. The vice president cast the deciding "aye" that moved the tax cut into law. The benefits were even more tilted to the rich than the first Bush tax cuts. When fully phased in, 53 percent of the new cuts went to the top one percent. Those making \$10 million or more pocketed an average of \$1 million a year – twice the haul they made from the earlier cuts, and every cent of it borrowed. "It was a deficit-financed tax cut," concedes Hubbard, who chaired Bush's Council of Economic Advisers.

The deal privileged gambling on stocks over working for a living: The tax rate the richest pay on their long-term capital gains was slashed by 25 percent, while their rate on dividends

ous year, wealthy individuals who pocketed the offshore profits paid the same rate on their bonanza, 15 percent, that a waitress at a diner might pay on her tips.

When Democrats regained control of both the House and Senate in 2006, they temporarily halted the GOP's binge of borrowing from the Treasury to give tax cuts to the wealthy. But that didn't stop Republicans from finding other ways to aid the rich. As the economy collapsed in 2008, the Bush administration used the crisis to provide a stealth handout to the nation's banks – even those at no risk of failing. Under the TARP bailout, overseen by Treasury secretary and former Goldman Sachs CEO Hank Paulson, taxpayers were forced to give banks \$254 billion for assets worth just \$176 billion – a handout of \$78 billion to the financial sector, including \$2.5 billion for Paulson's cronies at Goldman. "Paulson pushed the money into the hands of the banks – no strings attached, no accountability, no transparency," Elizabeth Warren, then-chair of the Congressional Oversight Panel, told *ROLLING STONE* last year.

As with the offshore profits, the banks used the money to line the pockets of executives and investors – while doing little to speed the recovery of Main Street. "We gave an enormous subsidy to these financial institutions, and they have not returned it to the American people," said Warren. "The administration could have said, 'All right, take this and multiply it throughout the economy.' But Paulson never made that a condition of taking the money."

TAKEN TOGETHER, THE BUSH YEARS EXPOSED the bankruptcy behind the theory that tax cuts for the rich will spur economic growth. “Let the rich get richer and everybody will benefit?” says Stiglitz. “That, empirically, is wrong. It’s a philosophy of trickle-down economics that’s belied by the facts.” Bush and Cheney proved once and for all that tax cuts for the wealthy produce only two things: “lower growth and greater inequality.”

The GOP’s frenzied handouts to the rich during the Bush era coincided with the weakest economic expansion since World War II – and the only one in modern American history in which the wages of working families actually fell and poverty increased. And what little expansion there was under Bush culminated in the worst fiscal crisis since the Great Depression. “The wreckage was left by Dick Cheney, Grover Norquist and the gang,” says Chafee. “This was their doing.”

By driving the economy into the ditch, Republicans left the next president little choice but to drive up deficits in the short term by launching a massive campaign of federal spending to ward off a global depression. But even the \$787 billion stimulus engineered by President Obama was hamstrung by his predecessor’s ongoing giveaway to the wealthy: Republicans insisted that nearly 10 percent of every stimulus dollar be devoted to financing the annual “patch” to the Alternative Minimum Tax – the off-budget legacy of Bush’s tax cuts for the rich. This was a \$70 billion handout that inflated the cost of the stimulus pack-

figure out how much they hated it,” says McIntyre, president of Citizens for Tax Justice. Republican rage over the president’s health care plan has far less to do with the size of government or the merits of the individual mandate than the blow to the investor class. If Obamacare remains in place and the Bush cuts for the wealthy expire as planned, top earners will be paying a tax of 23.8 percent on capital gains – more than they have at any time since Clinton cut the capital gains tax in 1997. Health care reform, griped *The Wall Street Journal*, was nothing but a “sneaky way” for Democrats to wage a “war on ‘the rich.’”

A key element of the GOP’s war on the poor was cemented by the surprise election of Scott Brown to replace Ted Kennedy in the Senate in January 2010. As a candidate, Brown had made his high-mileage GMC pickup truck the star of his campaign commercials. “I love this old truck,” he said. “It’s brought me closer to the people.” But Brown’s real allegiance was to his wealthy donors: the billionaire Koch brothers, who bankrolled the Tea Party, and the financial interests who made a last-minute investment of more than \$450,000 to propel Brown into office.

As soon as he was sworn in, Brown set about hollowing out the so-called Volcker Rule, which was designed to bar big financial institutions from using their own money to make risky, speculative bets on the market. By agreeing to provide Democrats with the crucial 60th vote on finance reform, Brown secured an exemption from the trading ban for mutual funds and insurers – a move directly benefiting Massachusetts-based

The Senate’s second-ranking Republican secured a deal to slash inheritance taxes on the rich by \$23 billion – while fighting to deny unemployment benefits for 5 million Americans left jobless by the recession.

age without stimulating anything – other than the paychecks of wealthy Americans.

From the outset of the Obama presidency, in fact, Republicans have engaged in a calculated, across-the-board campaign to protect the tax privileges of the wealthiest Americans. Their objective was made explicit by Rep. Eric Cantor during the height of the stimulus debate: “No Tax Increases to Pay for Spending” declared one bullet point on Cantor’s website. “House Republicans are insisting that any stimulus package include a provision precluding any tax increases, now or in the future, to pay for this new spending.” Having racked up the largest deficits in American history, Republicans suddenly found it expedient to return to their old-school rhetoric of deficit-bashing. “Under Bush, they had a story about deficits not mattering,” says Michael Ettlinger, who directs economic policy at the Center for American Progress. “Then, all of a sudden Obama becomes president, and deficits matter again.”

The battle reached a fever pitch over health care reform. To truly understand the depth of the GOP’s entrenched opposition to Obamacare, it’s crucial to understand how the reform is financed: The single largest source of funds comes from increasing Medicare taxes on the wealthy – including new taxes on investment income. According to the Tax Policy Center, Americans who make more than \$1 million a year will pay an extra \$37,381 in annual taxes under the plan. The top 400 taxpayers would contribute even more: an average of \$11 million each.

Rarely in American history has a tax so effectively targeted the top one percent. “It took Republicans about four months to

financial giants like Fidelity and MassMutual. Brown also insisted that the Wall Street giants who caused the financial collapse – banks like Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan Chase – be allowed to continue using taxpayer-subsidized capital to gamble on hedge funds and private-equity deals. Former Fed chair Paul Volcker was furious: “Allowing a bank to invest in a speculative fund,” he said, “goes against the very intent of the bill.”

But Brown wasn’t done. At the 11th hour, he forced Democrats to spike a tax on big banks and hedge funds that was designed to generate \$19 billion to pay for the costs of financial reform. As a result, consumers and small banks had to pick up the tab. Brown, meanwhile, was richly rewarded for his efforts on behalf of Wall Street: During a three-week period at the height of negotiations, he raked in \$140,000 in campaign cash from big financial firms, including Fidelity and MassMutual, Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan.

WHEN REPUBLICANS WON BACK control of the House in last year’s midterm elections, they followed Brown’s lead and moved swiftly to betray their Tea Party backers by running up more deficits on behalf of the rich. Within days of the election, Republicans not only secured a two-year extension of the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, they also enabled America’s richest scions to inherit millions of dollars without paying a dime in taxes. All told, the GOP’s two favors for the party’s biggest donors were secured in a lame-duck bargain that adds an-

other \$858 billion to the debt – an amount greater than the original stimulus plan the Republicans opposed so bitterly.

First, the GOP filibustered a Democrat-led effort to extend the Bush tax cuts on only the first \$250,000 of income. The party leadership's hard-line stance – supported by barely a third of all voters – turned \$90 billion over to the wealthiest Americans. It also set a precedent for further extensions that would cost nearly \$1 trillion over the next decade. At the same time, the GOP drove through a deal that actually *raised* taxes for couples who make less than \$40,000 a year – and then turned much of the extra cash over to couples who earn more than \$200,000. Obama agreed to this massive transfer of wealth in order to retain the Bush tax cuts for the middle class – but the only other significant thing he got in return was a one-year extension of jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed.

But even the GOP's big payday for the wealthy pales in comparison to the handout that Republicans secured by gutting the estate tax. With the expiration of the Bush tax cuts, the inheritance tax was set to snap back to its Clinton-era standard: exempting the first \$1 million of all estates from taxation, and stepping up the tax rate on the wealthiest estates to 55 percent. Instead, Obama agreed to raise the exemption to \$5 million and lower the top tax rate to 35 percent – an apparent horse trade demanded by the Senate's second-ranking Republican, Jon Kyl of Arizona, who then allowed the president's nuclear-stockpile treaty with Russia to move forward in the Senate.

Shockingly, the deal actually *sweetened* the bargain the super-rich had received in 2009, enabling the heirs to the richest 0.25 percent of estates to pocket an extra \$23 billion they would have otherwise owed in taxes under Bush. In fact, under the terms Kyl demanded, the federal government will spend more to eliminate or cut taxes for 100,000 rich people than it will to extend unemployment benefits for 7 million Americans.

In a little-noticed detail, the two-year deal also created a loophole that allows the wealthiest couples to pass on \$10 million to a child today – while they're still living – without paying a penny of tax. That means the rich can offload their wealth to their children before it increases in value – evading higher estate taxes in the future. "In the next two years," one tax attorney crowed to *The Wall Street Journal*, "wealthy people have an unprecedented opportunity to push a lot of the value of their assets out of the estate-tax system." According to tax historians, the new rules create the most generous tax environment for wealth transfers for the super-rich since 1931.

And that was just the beginning of the budget-busting handouts the GOP demanded for the rich. In April, Republicans in the House passed a budget that would have slashed income taxes on corporations and the wealthiest Americans to just 25 percent – a \$3 trillion giveaway that would have been financed by doubling out-of-pocket expenses for future retirees on Medicare. Top Republicans like Cantor have also pushed for a replay of the American Jobs Creation Act – endorsing a new tax amnesty that would allow corporate giants like Apple and Pfizer to bring home \$1.4 trillion in offshore profits that would be taxed at just 5.25 percent – a favor for the wealthy that would generate another \$79 billion in deficits. "At the same time they're talking about these big deficit problems, running around saying, 'We're broke,' they're contemplating one of the most egregious tax giveaways in recent memory," says Greenstein of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "The potential windfall gains are beyond enormous – and the lion's share would go to shareholders of these big corporations and their executives."

Never mind that the previous tax amnesty in 2004 created virtually no new jobs, as corporate executives eagerly pocketed the windfall for themselves: Republicans are once again claiming that the tax amnesty will enable corporations to spend their repatriated wealth putting Americans back to work. Mitt Romney, the GOP presidential front-runner, promises that the flood of corporate cash will generate "hundreds of thousands

The Enablers

Even with control of the House, Republicans couldn't divert tax money to the rich without help from key Democrats in the Senate



Chuck Schumer (New York)

Received \$2.7 million from Wall Street. Defended loophole that allows hedge-fund billionaires to pay only 15 percent in taxes. May back a tax "amnesty" to

allow giant corporations to evade billions in taxes on profits they've stashed offshore. **Key quote:** "\$250,000 makes you really rich in Mississippi, but it doesn't make you rich at all in New York."



Ben Nelson (Nebraska)

Corporate America's most dependable Democrat. Provided the 50th vote for Bush's tax cuts; helped the GOP downsize the stimulus and weaken health

care reform. Voted against jobless benefits for the unemployed while supporting \$21 billion in subsidies for Big Oil. **Key quote:** "One of the biggest challenges our job creators face is overregulation."



Joe Manchin (West Virginia)

Appeared in campaign ad firing a rifle at Obama's climate legislation. In office barely a year, has accepted \$600,000 from coal interests – and voted for a

GOP measure to permanently bar the EPA from regulating big carbon polluters. **Key quote:** "The EPA's overreach is destroying jobs in my state and all over the country, and it must be stopped."



Mary Landrieu (Louisiana)

Accepted almost \$1 million from Big Oil; prevented \$13 billion in industry tax breaks from being diverted to clean energy. Opposed a temporary halt

to offshore drilling, even after the BP spill. **Key quote:** "If I were one of them," she said, defending beleaguered oil executives, "I'd be tempted to just shut off the spigots and go elsewhere."



Kay Hagan (North Carolina)

Won praise from Rep. Eric Cantor for co-sponsoring GOP bill to allow America's richest corporations to pay only

5.25 percent in taxes on \$1.4 trillion in offshore profits. Voted for GOP "jobs" bill to repeal withholding tax on federal contractors. **Key quote:** Tax evaders like GE are victims of an "outdated" tax system that "traps" their profits abroad.

– if not millions – of good, permanent, private-sector jobs.” That flies in the face of basic economics, given that corporate America is already sitting on hundreds of billions in domestic cash reserves. What the tax amnesty would do, however, is boost stock prices. According to an analysis by JP Morgan, as much as two-thirds of the \$1.4 trillion that would be brought back into the country would go to stock “buybacks and dividends” rather than “new factories, new jobs and new equipment,” as Romney claims.

JP Morgan has a big stake in the debate – as do fellow bank-bailout beneficiaries Citigroup, Bank of America and Goldman Sachs. Combined, the four financial giants have \$87 billion in untaxed profits stockpiled offshore. That’s similar to the combined offshore profits of drug giants Pfizer and Merck at \$89 billion. Tech giants Cisco and Microsoft have more than \$61 billion they’d like to bring home, while Big Oil companies Exxon and Chevron have \$56 billion. The company with the most to gain, by far – with offshored reserves of \$94 billion – is corporate America’s most notorious tax scofflaw, GE.

Romney’s rival for the GOP nomination, Rick Perry, has also endorsed the tax amnesty for giant corporations. But for Perry, the proposal doesn’t go far enough on behalf of the rich. “Why not talk about how you are going to repatriate those dollars at a substantially lower rate than 35 percent?” Perry said recently, stumping in New Hampshire. “Like *zero*.”

In September, Perry went even further, proposing a flat tax that would take a sharp bite out of the paychecks of the poorest Americans – while slashing taxes by more than 40 percent for

IN RETROSPECT, THE TRUE VICTOR OF THE MIDTERM elections last year was not the Tea Party, or even Speaker of the House John Boehner. It was Grover Norquist.

“What has happened over the last two years is that Grover now has soldiers in the field,” says Bartlett, the architect of the Reagan tax cuts. “These Tea Party people, in effect, take their orders from him.” Indeed, a record 98 percent of House Republicans have now signed Norquist’s anti-tax pledge – which includes a second, little-known provision that played a key role in the debt-ceiling debacle. In addition to vowing not to raise taxes, politicians who sign the pledge promise to use any revenue generated by ending a tax subsidy to immediately finance – that’s right – more tax cuts.

Norquist insists the measure is necessary to force Congress to rein in spending. “I’m not focused on the deficit,” he says. “The metric that matters is keeping spending down.” But in the real world, the effect of Norquist’s oath is to prevent the government from cutting the deficit by ending tax breaks to the rich. All told, tax breaks cost the government \$1.2 trillion each year – far more than defense spending (\$744 billion), Medicare and Medicaid (\$719 billion) or Social Security (\$701 billion). And most of the breaks – think of them as government subsidies delivered through the tax code – go to the wealthy. The richest one percent of Americans receive a 13.5 percent boost in their incomes from such subsidies – almost double the benefit the bottom 80 percent receives. Under Norquist’s pledge, lawmakers are forbidden from ending any kind of tax break – mortgage deductions for luxury vacation homes, subsidies for giant oil

Every move Republicans make, from gutting consumer protections to polluting the environment, is designed to aid the rich – even if it requires borrowing from China, dismantling Medicare and taxing the middle class.

the wealthiest. When confronted by a reporter over the fact that his plan would give millions to the rich, Perry replied: “I don’t care about that.” His plan is almost as regressive as Herman Cain’s original 9-9-9 plan, which called for *increasing* taxes on 84 percent of Americans – squeezing \$4,400 a year out of every middle-class couple to finance a \$455,000 tax cut for millionaires. What’s more, both Perry and Cain want to abolish the estate tax entirely and eliminate all taxes on capital gains. A similar plan by Michele Bachmann would enable 23,000 millionaires to pay no taxes at all – while allowing the top 400 earners to pocket nearly two-thirds of their income tax-free, and then pass those riches on to their heirs without paying a penny. “It’s madness,” says Stiglitz. “And it is dangerous to the fiscal order. The wealthy know very well how to convert normal income to capital gains income.”

The Republican mania for rewarding the rich with tax cuts has become so warped that the normal rules of budgeting no longer seem to apply. Arguing for an extension of the Bush tax cuts, Sen. Kyl spelled out what could well serve as the Party of the Rich’s credo: “You should never have to offset the cost of a deliberate decision to reduce tax rates on Americans.” The same rule, of course, doesn’t apply to spending for those in need: At the time he called for more borrowing on behalf of the rich, Kyl was also fighting to deny unemployment benefits to 5 million Americans. “Continuing to pay people unemployment compensation,” he scoffed, “is a disincentive for them to seek new work.”

companies, lower tax rates for private-equity millionaires – without using the money to pay for another tax cut. “If you can’t get rid of tax expenditures – if old Grover is going to call that a ‘tax increase’ – it’s not just ludicrous, it’s deception,” says Simpson, the former GOP senator.

Ludicrous or not, Norquist’s intransigence on tax expenditures killed the “grand bargain” that President Obama proposed during the debt-ceiling standoff. In return for \$1 trillion in cuts to social spending and national security, plus another \$650 billion in reductions to entitlements like Medicare, Obama asked Republicans to get rid of \$1.2 trillion in wasteful tax subsidies. “Democrats weren’t talking about raising taxes – they were talking about eliminating tax expenditures, for God’s sakes!” says Voinovich. “Many of them should have been eliminated a long time ago.” But with so many Republicans committed to Norquist’s anti-revenue pledge, Boehner was forced to walk away from the deal.

“Grover’s got ‘em terrified,” says Simpson. “I always tell Republicans, ‘Hell, Grover can’t kill ya. He can’t burn down your house. The only thing he can do to you is defeat you in re-election – and if re-election means more to you than your country, then you shouldn’t be in the legislature.’”

The battle over the debt ceiling underscores the GOP’s rapid evolution into the Party of the Rich. The budget savings projected from the compromise that Republicans wound up agreeing to – \$2.1 trillion – won’t even begin to pay for costs incurred by the Bush tax cuts. In their first decade alone, the cuts would

up depriving the Treasury of \$2.5 trillion – with 38 percent of the money now going to the richest one percent of Americans. For all their talk of cutting the deficit in recent years, Republicans have spent far more of the public's money to subsidize the wealthy.

Indeed, since Republicans began their tax-cut binge in 1997, they have succeeded in making the rich much richer. While the average income for the bottom 90 percent of taxpayers has remained basically flat over the past 15 years, those in the top 0.01 percent have seen their incomes more than *double*, to \$36 million a year. Translated into wages, that means most Americans have received a raise of \$1.50 an hour since the GOP began cutting taxes during the Gingrich era. The most elite sliver of American society, meanwhile, saw their pay soar by \$10,000 an hour.

America became a great nation with a prosperous middle class on the strength of a progressive tax code – one that demands the most of those who benefit most from our society. But the Party of the Rich has succeeded in breaking the back of that ideal. Today, says Johnston, “the tax system ceases to be progressive when you get to the very top of the wealthiest one

percent.” Above that marker, the richer you get, the *lower* your relative tax burden. “We have moved toward a plutocracy,” Warren Buffett warned in a recent interview. “As people have gotten richer and richer, they have been favored by taxation – and have gotten richer to a greater degree.”

Far from creating the trickle-down economics promised by Reagan, the policies pursued by the modern Republican Party are *gusher up*. Under the leadership of Majority Leader Eric Cantor, the House's radicalized GOP caucus is pushing a predatory agenda for a new gilded age. Every move that Republicans make – whether it's to gut consumer protections, roll back environmental regulations, subsidize giant agribusinesses, abolish health care reform or just drill, baby, drill – is consistent with a single overarching agenda: to enrich the nation's wealthiest individuals and corporations, even if it requires borrowing from China, weakening national security, dismantling Medicare and taxing the middle class. With the nation still mired in the worst financial crisis since the 1930s, Republicans have categorically rejected the one financial policy with a proven record of putting the country back on a more prosperous footing. “You hear the Republicans say that you don't dare raise taxes in a weak economy,” says Stockman. “Ronald Reagan did – three times.” Not even the downgrading of America's debt – which placed the world's only superpower on credit par with New Zealand and Belgium – has given GOP leaders cause to reconsider their pro-wealth jihad. In August, as the so-called Supercommittee began its work to complete the debt-ceiling deal by reducing future deficits by another \$1.5 trillion, Cantor issued the Party of the Rich's marching orders, insisting that Republicans not buckle under the “tremendous pressure” to hike taxes and instead target spending cuts in “mandatory programs.”

The composition of the committee offers little hope that Congress will hold the rich accountable for their share of the deficit burden. While Democrats appointed deal-oriented centrists like Sen. Max Baucus to the committee, Republicans stocked it with anti-revenue hard-liners, including Sens. Jon Kyl and Pat Toomey, who used to run the Club for Growth – an ally of Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform. “Your wallet is safe,” Norquist tweeted after the Republican roster was announced.

In an interview with *ROLLING STONE*, Norquist expresses pride that the GOP has been so thoroughly transformed since the days of Reagan. “It's a different Republican Party now,” he says. Norquist even goes so far as to liken the kind of Republicans common in Reagan's day – those willing to raise taxes to strengthen the economy – to segregationists. The “modern Republican Party,” he says, would no sooner recognize a revenue-raiser than the “modern Democratic Party would recognize George Wallace.”

Norquist expresses no discomfort at the moral impact of his project – providing tax favors for the wealthy that are paid for by cutting services to those who truly need them. “I understand greed and envy,” Norquist says. “The idea that somebody's making money and you want to steal some of it? That's an interesting idea. But it's not morality. It's certainly not justice.”

Such extremist rhetoric – equating taxation with theft – is exactly the kind of talk that dismays old-line Republicans. Many of those who fought for years at the side of Ronald Reagan say they no longer recognize traditional GOP values in the new Republican Party. Fighting for the rich, after all, is not the same as championing the right.

“You can look up my record: On conservatism and taxes I was better than Jesse Helms,” says Simpson, the former senator. “But whatever happened to common sense? People are going to look around in five or 10 years and say, ‘Whatever happened to the things that made me comfortable? That made our streets and schools good things?’ And they'll look, hopefully, at Grover Norquist. I can say to you with deepest sincerity: If this country and this legislature are in thrall to Grover Norquist, we haven't got a prayer.”

How the Debt Deal Protects the Rich

As Congress looks for \$1.5 trillion in budget cuts, Republicans are insisting that none of the savings come from closing tax loopholes

ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Total spending in areas targeted for cuts

\$650 BILLION
Special ed, student aid, assistance to poor schools

\$310 BILLION
National Institutes of Health

\$100 BILLION
Centers for Disease Control and FDA

\$98 BILLION
Head Start and child-care programs

\$47 BILLION
Energy grants to help poor families afford heat

\$20 BILLION
Job training for the unemployed

\$11 BILLION
After-school tutoring programs

EXEMPTED FROM CUTS

Tax breaks and subsidies for the rich

\$690 BILLION
Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest two percent

\$321 BILLION
Itemized deductions for top-bracket taxpayers

\$129 BILLION
Subsidies for foreign profits

\$97.5 BILLION
Subsidies for business inventories

\$44 BILLION
Subsidies for oil and gas companies

\$21.4 BILLION
Carried-interest loophole for hedge-fund managers

\$10 BILLION
Tax break on loans for vacation homes & yachts

Source: Center for American Progress



WELCOME TO THE

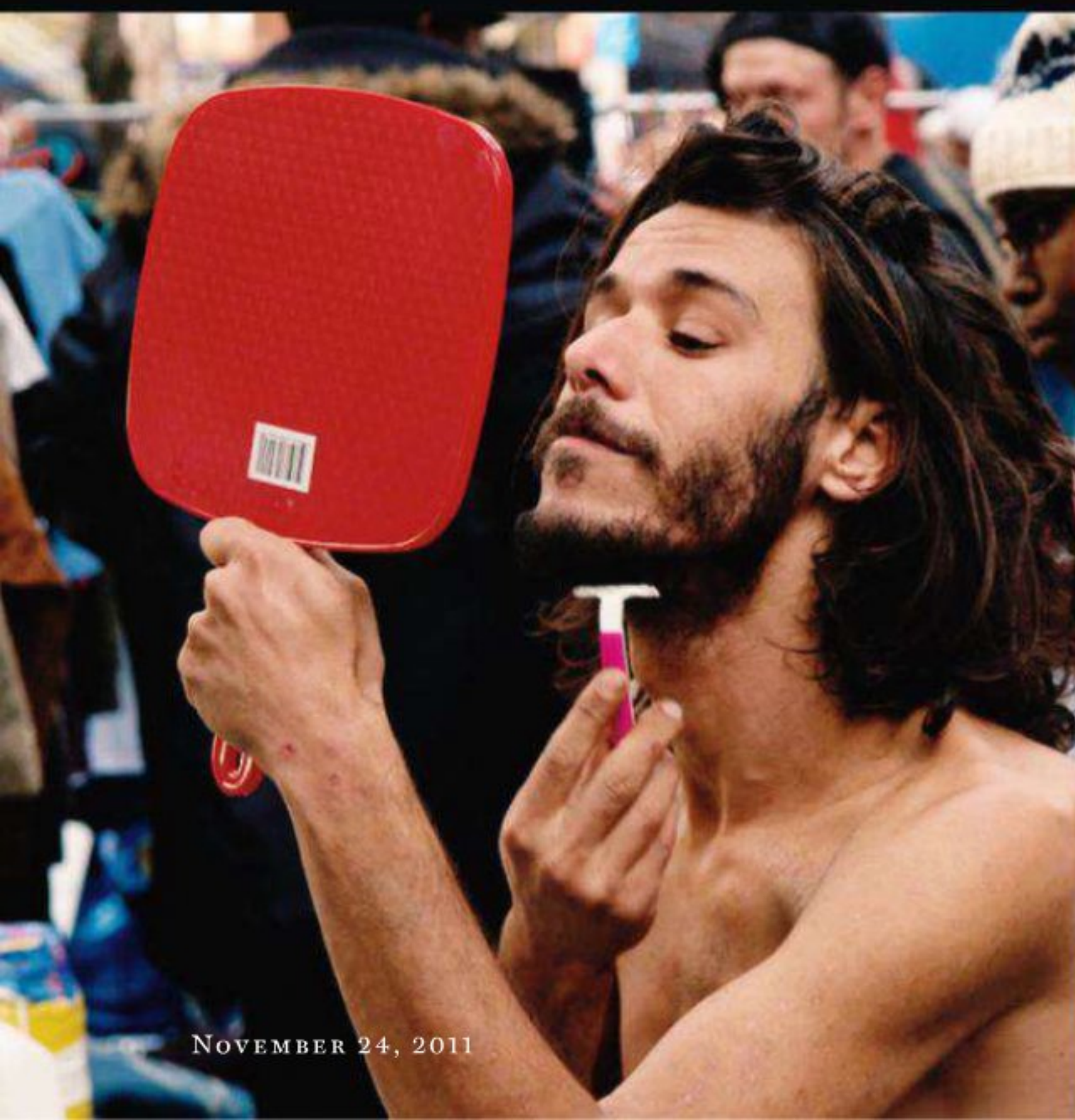
The inside story of how a bunch of anarchists and radicals inspired and launched a nationwide movement they never expected





THE OCCUPATION

by the Arab Spring took Wall Street with nothing but sleeping bags would succeed. *By Jeff Sharlet* ▸ *Photographs by Sacha Lecca*



IT STARTED WITH A TWEET – “DEAR AMERICANS, THIS JULY 4th, dream of insurrection against corporate rule” – and a hashtag: #occupywallstreet. It showed up again as a headline posted online on July 13th by *Adbusters*, a sleek, satirical Canadian magazine known for its mockery of consumer culture. Beneath it was a date, September 17th, along with a hard-to-say slogan that never took off, “Democracy, not corporatocracy,” and some advice that did: “Bring tent.” On August 2nd, the New York City General Assembly convened for the first time in Lower Manhattan, right by the market’s bronze icon, “Charging Bull,” snorting in perpetuity. It wasn’t the usual protest crowd. “The traditional left – the unions, the progressive academics, the community organizations – wanted nothing to do with this in the beginning,” says Marisa Holmes, a 25-year-old

filmmaker from Columbus, Ohio, who was working on a BBC documentary called *Creating Freedom*, about why people rebel. “I think it’s telling that, of the early participants, so many were artists and media makers.”

Even the instigators and architects present at the creation marvel at how things just happened. “It was a magic moment,” says Kalle Lasn, *Adbusters*’ 69-year-old co-founder. “After that, things took on a life of their own, and then it was out of our hands.”

Adbusters’ call to arms had been timid by the standards of the movement quickly taking form. The magazine had proposed a “worldwide shift in revolutionary tactics,” but their big ideas went no further than pressuring Obama to appoint a presidential commission on the role of money in politics. In Lasn’s imagination, though, that would be just the start. “We knew, of course, that Egypt had a hard regime change where a torturous dictator was removed,” he says, “but many of us felt that in America, a soft regime change was possible.”

Possible, but not likely. They were still thinking in inches. “To be perfectly honest, we thought it might be a steppingstone, not the establishment of a whole thing,” says David Graeber, a 50-year-old anthropologist and anarchist whose teaching gig at Yale was not renewed, some suspect, because he took part in radical actions. It was Graeber who gave the movement its theme: “We are the 99 percent.” He also helped rescue it from the usual sorry fate of the left in America, the schisms and infighting over who’s in charge. He had shown up at the August 2nd meeting thinking it was an *Adbusters* thing; he was surprised to find a rally dominated by the antiquated ideas of the Cold War left. “This is bullshit,” Graeber thought. He recognized a Greek anarchist organizer, Georgia Sagri, and with her help identified kindred spirits.

Contributing editor JEFF SHARLET’s latest book is *Sweet Heaven When I Die*.

“We looked around. I didn’t recognize faces, everybody was so young. I went by T-shirts – Zapatistas, Food Not Bombs.” Anarchists in name or inclination. He calls them the “horizontal crowd” because they loathe hierarchy. “It was really just tapping on shoulders. And a lot of people said, ‘Shit, yeah.’”

They set up a circle in a nearby park, dubbed it the New York City General Assembly and got down to talking about

**“HONESTLY, WE
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how they’d pull off the occupation. They were inspired by something they’d read on the *Adbusters* website, a quote from Spanish political theorist Raimundo Viejo, who was active in the revolts across Europe this year. “The anti-globalization movement was the first step on the road. Back then, our model was to attack the system like a pack of wolves. There was an alpha male, a wolf who led the pack, and those who followed behind. Now the model has evolved. Today we are one big swarm of people.”

But the reality was, they only numbered about 60 people. “You always fantasize,” says Graeber. “But at some level, you’ve given up on thinking it’s really going to work.” They had no money. And they were planning to take over one of the most heavily policed public spaces on the planet. “Everybody was talking about occupying Wall Street,” says Marina Sitrin, author of an oral history of revolution called *Horizontalism*. “Having been around

NYPD for two decades, I kind of chuckled to myself and decided not to share what I thought at the time was a wise perspective, which is we should prepare for everybody to get arrested.” And that’d be the end of it, another short, sharp chapter in the little-read book of the modern American left.

Adbusters had called for 20,000 bodies; only 2,000 showed up on September 17th. And maybe 100 of them slept over that first night in Zuccotti Park, a block-long granite plaza tucked between skyscrapers a couple of blocks from Ground Zero. The next night, there were a few more, and on Monday morning, they were still there. There was a police raid on Tuesday, and the little press the occupation got was mocking: *The New York Times* sent an entertainment reporter, who made fun of the protesters. In the days that followed, the few grew in numbers, a demographic that didn’t conform to media clichés: a gritty spiral jetty of anarchist punks and out-of-work construction workers and teachers who sleep in the park and rise early to get to school. Cooks and nannies and librarians, lots of librarians, and Teamsters and priests and immigrants, legal and otherwise, and culture jammers, eco-warriors, hackers, and men and women in Guy Fawkes masks, an army of stunt doubles from *V for Vendetta*, all joined by young veterans of the Arab Spring and the revolts in Greece and Spain – actual revolutionaries who had overthrown dictators and made Western nations shake.

Now there are more than 1,600 occupations around the country and the world, some big, most small, some no more than one angry soul on the side of the road with a sign that says “We are the 99 percent.” They are in Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, Oakland, Seattle and Nashville; in London, in Sydney, in Cape Town, Tokyo and Sao Paulo. By November, Occupy Wall Street was serving more than 3,000 meals every day from its free kitchen, stocked mostly with donated food. At night, a rotating cast of as many as 500 bed down in the park, many of them using blankets and sleeping bags provided by the occupation. There’s a library with some 4,500 cataloged volumes – everything from the *Communist Manifesto* to *He’s Just Not That Into You* – an all-volunteer medical staff to provide free health care, a station that gives out hand-rolled cigarettes if you want them.

Six weeks in, when Marina Sitrin sat down to collect her thoughts about the movement she had helped start, words failed. So she began with a slogan – “my favorite chant, preferably sung: *This is what democracy looks like*.” The kind of thing you’d hear shouted at every rally against a war or a law or a reactor for the past 20 years. But it wasn’t true anymore. This isn’t just what democracy looks like, say the occupiers, it’s what it *feels* like.



ONE OF THE BASIC PREMISES OF the Occupy movement is the idea that democracy exists for most Americans as little more than an unhappy choice between two sides of the same corporate coin. “We’ve been so alienated from our own sense of agency that being asked to be part of any real decision is exciting,” a woman in her late thirties who calls herself Beatrix tells me. She’s one of the old hands, close to the core of nearly every major radical action in New York of the past decade. So she’s a little jaded, but even so, she’s startled by what’s happening: “Movements usually spend a lot of time on education, telling people why they need to come to the demonstration. This is exactly the opposite. The people came. Now we’re all deciding together what happens.”

“Right off the bat I was addicted,” says Jesse LaGreca, sipping a beer at a fireman’s bar near the park. Two hundred and fifty pounds, with wiseguy eyes and a permanent ruddy flush, LaGreca looks like he grew up on a bar stool in a place like this. He has a decade-plus of dead-end jobs behind him. The best was managing a L’Occitane store in the West Village – \$15 an hour, no health insurance. Lately, he’s been making his living as a writer, posting deeply researched rants against the Republicans on the liberal blog Daily Kos and asking for donations. “You put up a PayPal link and tell people, ‘Dude, I’m fucked. Can you help me?’” Just before heading

ON THE MARCH

“It’s a civil revival,” says one protester. “Down here, we’re becoming citizens.”

down to Occupy Wall Street, he wrote a post called “If I light myself on fire, do you think these bastards will notice?” It was a tribute to Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian fruit vendor who did just that, igniting the Arab Spring. LaGreca also asked for a MetroCard.

“I’m not gonna lie,” LaGreca says. “First thing I saw at the park was the topless girls.” He knows how that sounds. “Can’t help it, dude. But then I saw the food lines” – the Occupy Wall Street kitchen, feeding all comers – “and then I saw the books. I’m a nerd, man. I read and read.” He dropped out of high school in the 11th grade, but continued his education on the job as a school janitor in New Jersey. “Read all of Thoreau, Emerson, Shakespeare. Read a lot of Dostoyevsky. I was a shitty janitor.”

So there were books, free food and women, but that wasn’t what kept him there. “I see people talking. Everybody’s talking, man, and I can talk, too.” He didn’t just have a voice. He had amplification – the human microphone. On the fourth day of the occupation, a former science teacher named Justin Wedes was speaking to the crowd through a megaphone when a policeman threw him to the ground, the first of a series of rough arrests that morning. “Just to intimidate people,” recalls Graeber. One man’s face was ground into a flow-

er bed, another dragged, cuffed, until his hands bled, another left gasping, denied his inhaler. The cops moved in, citing a law prohibiting the use of electronic amplification. This turned out to be a lucky break: Without conventional means, the occupiers would have to figure out a new way to hear one another.

Sitrin, schooled in the factory takeovers of Argentina, which followed that country’s economic collapse, had an ingenious solution: “the people’s mic.” One person speaks, all repeat, the words rippling through the crowd. “Mic check!” it begins with a single voice. “Mic check!” thunders the assembly. It’s absurd, its inherent humor and brevity undercutting the wordy earnestness that usually makes political meetings unbearable. “My concern”/“MY CONCERN”/“is deeper”/“IS DEEPER”/“than sleeping bags!”/“THAN SLEEPING BAGS!”

“Cops made a huge mistake,” says LaGreca. “The people’s mic, it’s such a unifying force. Almost like a choir. Like a modern religious revival. But it’s a civil revival. Down here, we’re becoming citizens.”

THE PEOPLE CAME. AND THEN they stayed. Occupations are literally about refilling space – parks and plazas, a hollowed-out public sphere. That begins with bodies, accompanied by noise. Which is where the drums come in, bongos and tablas and tambourines and full drum kits with snares. In the begin-

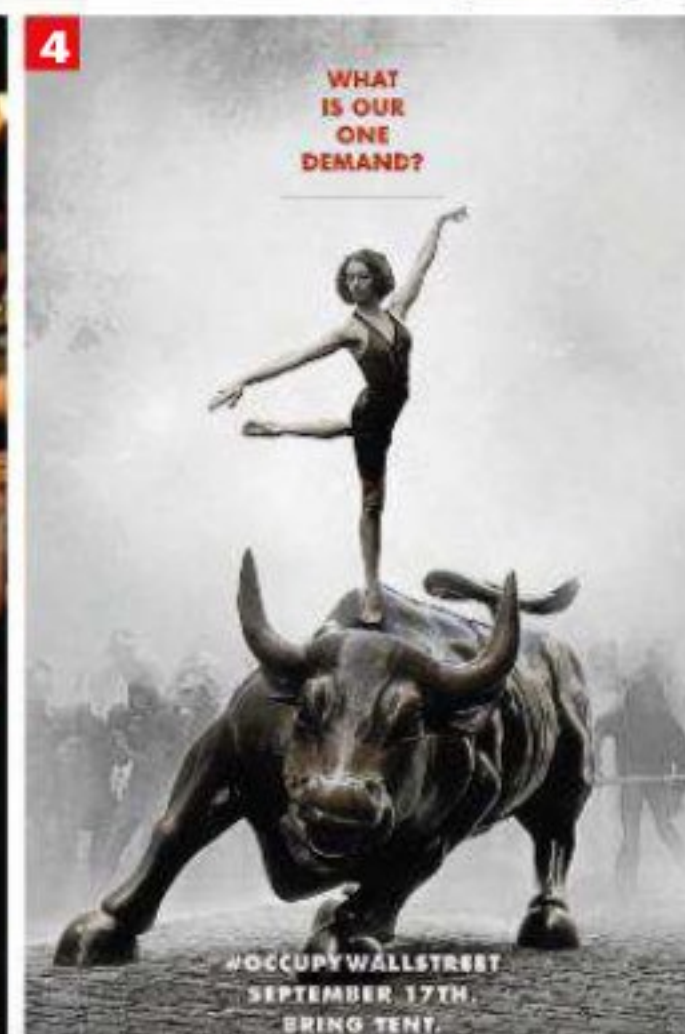
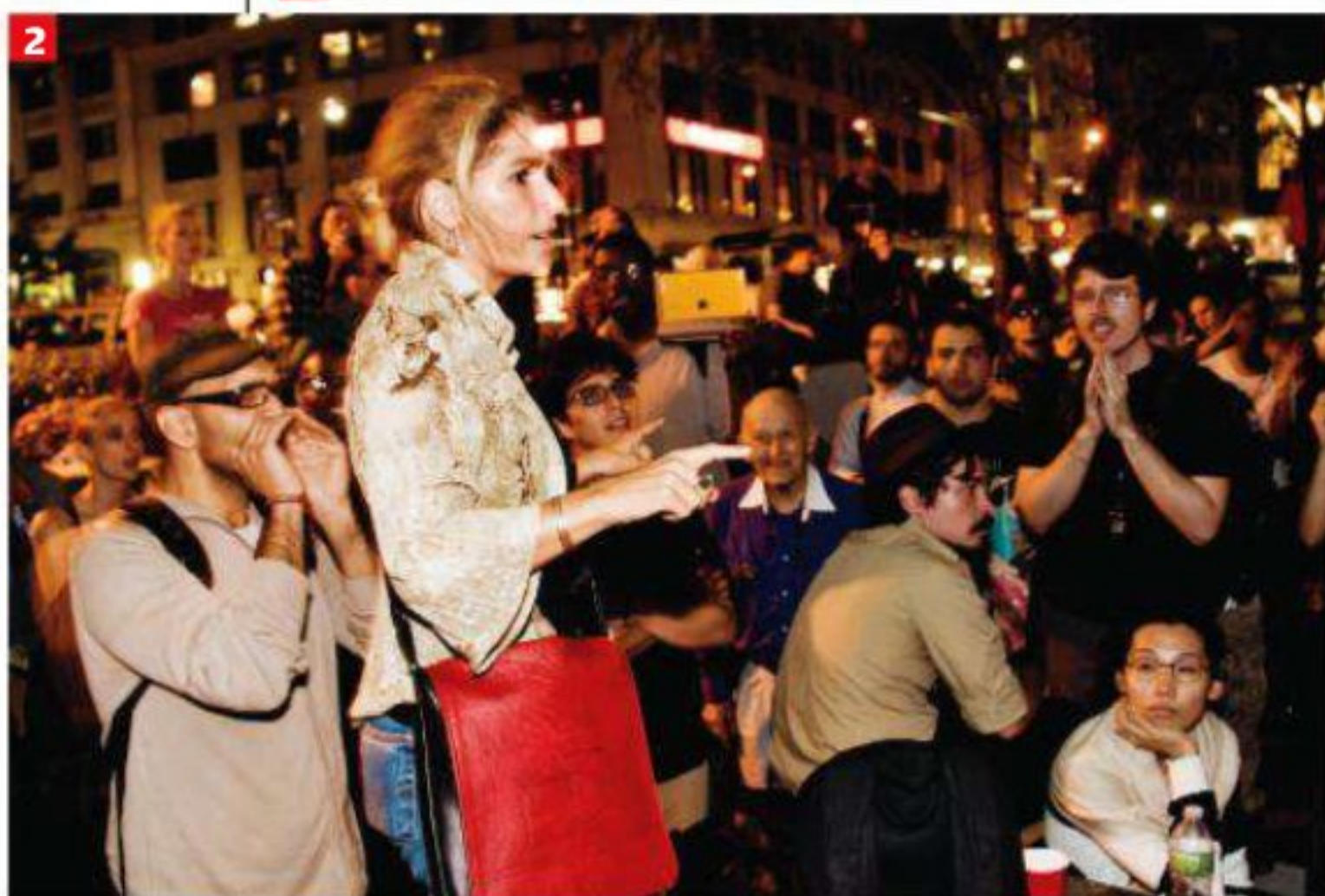
ning, the drummers drummed as long as their arms could flail, sometimes 12 hours a day. The noise was so loud it was like a wall on the western edge of the park. At first the drums were exciting, even if you weren't really a drum-circle kind of person, which most of the occupiers weren't. But then they got annoying. Like when you were trying to sleep. Or talk. Or hold a general assembly.

One of the first times the General Assembly asked the drummers to quiet down, they simply moved their drums farther down the park. Another time, the drummers said what they were doing was sacred; they'd quiet down in a little while (they didn't). "This movement would not be here right now if we didn't do what we did, by playing all day," a drummer boasted. One night they grew so rowdy, they began to drown out the General Assembly altogether. So the first order of democracy was to bring the drummers, many of whom did not want to stop drumming long enough to talk, into the assembly. A lot of them weren't interested. "Aggro" was the word you started hearing around the camp. "Scary" was another. What was to be done?

The drummers did it themselves, imperfectly but "horizontally," through self-regulation rather than "vertical" rule imposed from above. They pulled themselves into a "working group," one of the key units of organization in the occupation – there are 82 as of this writing and there will almost certainly be more tomorrow. The drummers called their group Pulse and agreed to lay down their sticks for a while to attend general assemblies.

"John" – that's all – a compact man, all taut vein and muscle, with a shock of wiry gray-black hair, spoke for Pulse one night, arms twitching in just a T-shirt on a cold evening. "We," he said. "We," the crowd said. "Want to respect you." Back came the echo, a call-and-response through which everybody, apparently, respected everybody. But John wasn't satisfied. "But we want respect too!" he shouted bitterly. The drummers, he reminded the General Assembly, had restricted themselves to two-hour sessions, noon to two and four to six. But there was a move afoot to cut them back to only one two-hour drum-athon. "We are the movement's heartbeat!" John shouted. "You're cutting out your heartbeat!"

To which another speaker, an earnest young woman named Linda, responded, "I have a clarifying question. How is it that one group can claim to be my heartbeat?"



Scenes From a Revolution

- (1) Cecily McMillan, a 23-year-old grad student at the New School, getting arrested – the cops blasted her with pepper spray and stepped on her head. (2) Activist Marina Sitrin speaking to the General Assembly. (3) Protester Jesse LaGreca, who skewered a Fox News reporter in a YouTube clip that went viral. (4) One of the original Adbusters call to arms.

THE FIRST NIGHT THAT I stayed at Zuccotti Park, bodies were laid out like tiles, head to toe, in circles and blocked out in squares and the occasional heap. There were street-sleeping pros, homeless and crusty punks, wrapped up in tarps, a few people on air mattresses with fluffy pillows. I didn't actually sleep. I paced among the tarp-covered bodies, sat on the steps, browsed the library, drank coffee from the food trucks open 24/7. The second night, after beers with LaGreca and a few other occupiers, I followed his friend Austin, a college dropout – a casualty of his student loans – who works with autistic children, to the Comfort Station for some bedding of my own. "We'll set you up on the margins,"

said Austin. "That way you can get out if you need to."

Twice I woke up. Once when a squat woman with dreads down to her knees shuffled by with a broom, a cleaning detail, and woke another sleeper, who stood up with his sleeping bag wrapped around him, stumbled, and gave up, letting it drop to reveal a sculpted body, naked but for dog tags. And a second time when a deranged man, top-heavy like a bulldog, punched the air above my head, daring anyone to take a shot at him. The occupation's security, thin-limbed men with walkie-talkies, spread their arms out like birds and surrounded him. "We love you, man," they said, over and over, containing but never touching. Finally he fled; the scene was too strange for conventional crazy.

If Occupy is “semireligious,” which is how many at the park describe it, and “a spiritual insurrection,” in the words of *Adbusters* senior editor Micah White, then its rituals might be counted as these: First, occupation itself. Second, the General Assembly. Third, the kitchen and the food line. And finally, sleep, lying among your comrades, everyone vulnerable, everyone absurd, stretched out between the coffee trucks and the police cruisers, under the watchful eye of a mobile NYPD surveillance tower jacked up over a truck.

When I returned a week later, the scene had darkened. “It started with punks and nice academic anarchists and grad students and labor organizers,” said a journalist who’d slipped into the movement. “Then it got really mainstream. But now it’s like a circus.” The human mic wasn’t as loud. The sanitation group threatened to strike. There were more signs that made no sense at all (my favorite: “Alligator Fuck Housed Me,” followed by a frowny face). There were suspicions of police infiltration and accusations of treason. And the people who ran the kitchen, confronted by street people in need of more care than a protest camp can provide and sometimes given to violence, revolted, serving only rice. They even proposed a fast. The other organizers would have none of it. “In this camp, the bullshit flows in certain directions sometimes,” said one participant at a daily coordinators’ meeting, but that would be no excuse for starving anybody. “Everybody eats,” chimed in another coordinator. “Junkie or tourist, a donator or a worker – everybody eats.”

And then there were the tents. Zuccotti, renamed Liberty Plaza by occupiers, had become a tent city. For some people, the turning point occurred the night the drummers tried to drown out the people’s mic at General Assembly, but I think it was the tents. They have proved to be one of Occupy Wall Street’s most contentious issues. At the start of the protests, the rapper Lupe Fiasco donated 50 tents, but the police tore them down. In mid-October, members decided to try again, putting up a medical tent. Police moved in to dismantle it, but Jesse Jackson happened to be visiting the camp and put his body in the way. Cops on the scene got the word from on high that it wasn’t worth it to try and arrest him. “Jesse threw down for us,” LaGreca says. Soon, the park at night was filled with the clickety-click of tent legs crackling into assembly.

With the tents came a new kind of territory: turf, even private property. The park’s sobriety, an agreed-upon principle, began to erode. The police reportedly started directing street people to the park but refused to help when some got out of control. “You’ve got a right to express yourself,” went the cop’s refrain. “He’s got a right to express himself.” Junkies came and then

the people who supply them. Some tents became shooting galleries. Rumors began to circulate – that there’d been a stabbing, that someone was running around with an AIDS-infected needle, that the hacker group Anonymous had a plan to destroy the credit ratings of the cops. A man who worked in the kitchen was arrested for sexual assault.

By late October, there were three levels of internal security. The kitchen closed at eight. The 24/7 library rolled up around midnight. Liberty Park is a city now, and it has hours. There’s even a town-planning committee that has held meetings at 16 Beaver Street, in an oddly shaped room with a movie screen and a grand piano.

But here’s the thing: Anyone can still join. It’s another old protest slogan meta-

WHEN I RETURNED, THE SCENE HAD DARKENED. IT WAS A TENT CITY, WITH ACCUSATIONS OF TREASON AND RUMORS OF VIOLENCE.

morphosed. “Whose streets?” would go the call. “Our streets,” came the reply. Now it’s personal. Whose city? Your city, there for the making. All you have to do is show up.

REPORTERS KEEP SNIFFING around for leaders, but while it’s true that the movement has spawned celebrities – like LaGreca, who lambasted a Fox News reporter in a YouTube clip that went viral – its resistance to organized leadership has proved enduring. Kalle Lasn is simply watching in awe from his home in Vancouver. David Graeber left for Austin four days after the occupation started. Marina Sitrin stays active in the legal team dedicated to working with Occupy Wall Street’s arrestees (there have been almost 1,000 arrests in New York and more than 3,000 movementwide, as of this writing), but she’s far enough removed from the action that LaGreca has never heard of her, just as the thousands who have joined the camp for a night have never heard of him, either. The evasion of organized leadership that for many began as a tactic – leaders are targets and weak links, subject to prosecution and co-option – has now grown into a principle.

Which left the biggest questions – What is Occupy trying to say, and who will be its voice? – with no conventional answers. The

press found this maddening. It “doesn’t really take you to a particular bumper-sticker action,” declared a puzzled Gerald Seib at *The Wall Street Journal* – he couldn’t imagine any other worthwhile outcome. Even some within the movement have their doubts. “You don’t seriously believe this is a leaderless movement, do you?” Cecily McMillan, a 23-year-old graduate student at the New School, asks me one day. Not possible, she says, that’s an illusion crafted by the OWS secret elite, who she insists are unresponsive to the demand for a concrete agenda by the “actual 99 percent.”

McMillan is Northeast regional organizer for the youth section of the Democratic Socialists of America, which bills itself as the largest socialist organization in the United States. She’s been involved with the Occupy movement since August, despite sharp differences with most of the people in the park. “I believe in a constrained view of revolution,” she says, by which she means putting pressure on mainstream politicians. And for this, she says, she has suffered. “I have been called a terrorist. I have been called CIA, FBI. I have been called a Democrat!” Like Lasn, she wants regime change. Unlike most of the occupiers, she believes it requires the guidance of those, like her, possessed of what she calls “cultural capital.”

She’s a former cheerleader; she used to want to be a politician. She says her studies and her work – she’s also a nanny – prevent her from sleeping in the park. But she’s not afraid to put her body on the line. She was arrested after she charged Wall Street three times, a “direct action” that even some veteran anarchists – militant and masked – considered wildly courageous, if foolish. A cop thought so, too, blasted her with pepper spray, knocked her down, stepped on her head and snarled at her, “Shut up. You get what you deserve, cunt bitch.”

We met in the atrium of 60 Wall Street, built in 1989 as a headquarters for JP Morgan and sold to Deutsche Bank right after 9/11. It looks like a bad Italian restaurant – white-tiled columns, mirrored ceiling, a grotto, stunted palms. This is where many of the movement’s working groups meet. At any given time there might be a half-dozen of them – the People’s Kitchen, Alternative Banking, Tactics, Medics, Sanitation. McMillan had just come from a gathering of one of the biggest and most influential groups, Facilitation, responsible for setting the agenda of the daily General Assembly. She was there as the least bristly representative of the working group that bluntly calls itself Demands, and her first demand was a place on the agenda, which she claimed had been denied by “infiltrators.” She wasn’t talking about police; she meant other occupiers opposed to her ideas.

The question of demands, in all their variety – whether to make them, when to make them, what to demand – is a peculiar

WELCOME TO THE OCCUPATION

one in that it's at the heart of the national occupation debate, and yet mostly irrelevant to the occupiers at Wall Street. Their demand is simply for a better world, which, as far as they're concerned, they've already started building. So to say that McMillan's group didn't have broad support would be kind. The divide in the park might be better expressed as between those who didn't believe that the demands group even counted as a part of the occupation, and those willing to let them propose their demands before shooting them down.

McMillan seems to see her role as an underground leader almost as a genetic birthright. "My grandfather is Harlon Joye," she told me almost immediately and emphasized several times across a number of conversations. "He drafted the SDS constitution" – as in, Students for a Democratic Society, one of the key organizations of 1960s revolt. She sees herself as giving "a voice to the voiceless." To do that, she says, the movement needs concrete demands. Any demands. The demand at which the group arrived – "Jobs for All," meaning a public-works program providing 25 million union-wage jobs – was not her first choice. But McMillan's will did not matter – she was a servant of "the workers."

While we were talking, a tall, beautiful woman with olive skin and a black leather coat was giving me the eye. The evil one. She was part of a little squad of four that became a nucleus around which more gathered, until they became about a dozen, and that's when they surrounded me, close up, cutting me off from McMillan. They were, I learned, a "swarm," and they were performing an "intervention." On me.

"We were hearing there's a ROLLING STONE interview about demands," said a longhaired man in shorts and only wool socks on his feet, a leaf pinned to his sleeve.

"We're actually just talking about my history?" said McMillan.

"There's been a lot of issues with the demands," no-shoes said, ignoring McMillan. "As well as the kind of press we're getting. The place we're in now, as a movement, is actually slaying co-opters. Any political, ideological co-optation of the movement."

"That's actually where our conversation started," said McMillan.

"Right. But a lot of people see the discussion coming from the groups you've been working with." He mimed out the problem with his hands, one socked foot balancing on the other. "Demands are pretty much speaking for the whole group."

"All we want is a voice," McMillan said.

Next to her, a small pale woman with a quiet face and quick eyes tilted a shoulder away from McMillan and declared to me and the rest of the swarm, "I want to be clear. We can have a voice without having demands." She was Marisa Holmes,

the filmmaker who'd been there since the beginning. She seemed egoless, her confidence precise.

From there, the conversation devolved into a dense thicket of the intricacies of process. What is consensus? Where's the threshold? 90 percent? 75 percent? 80 percent? At issue were reports that McMillan had attempted to strong-arm decisions based on a simple majority vote. McMillan seemed frustrated by the accusation, which she couldn't quite deny. Two months ago, she was a perfect organizing machine – disciplined, articulate, working-class roots with a grad-school veneer. But she was discovering she didn't function as well on the new terrain of the occupation, where the traditional methods of the left no longer meant as much as they once had. She had no idea that providing "a voice for the voiceless" was not a service in demand in a movement built on the idea

"YOU COME HERE WITH WHATEVER YOU'VE BEEN OCD'ING ABOUT," SAYS ONE PROTESTER. "THIS IS WHERE WE'RE REBOOTING HISTORY."


that everyone can speak for themselves. To her, the occupation was a symbol more than a community. When we walked by the camp later that night she seemed surprised: "They have tents now?"

ALMOST EVERYONE YOU MEET in the park will tell you some variation of one thing. They aren't doing this for 2012, they don't want to go to Washington, they don't care what Congress or *The New York Times* or Bill Maher or Kanye West thinks of them. They aren't trying to provide a voice for the voiceless. They are doing it for themselves, and they speak for no one but themselves. They are the 99 percent; so am I, so are you. Make your own demands if you want to.

Late one night, I met a woman named Elisa Miller at the Occupy Library. It was 2 a.m., and people were still up talking, a group of four Hasidic Jews sitting on the broad steps of the park's shallow stone bowl, singing quiet Hebrew harmony around a soft guitar. Miller, a 38-year-old former landscape architect who took a bus up from New Orleans, had been in the park since the beginning. She said she hadn't really laughed since Katrina: "We've

been occupying New Orleans for six fucking years." But something had changed. She had long straight brown hair and the loose rubbery gestures of someone who's exhausted and yet glad to be awake. "You come here with what you've been OCD'ing about," she said. "First day, you've got a sign: 'Tax the rich!' And it's, like, sure, that's a good idea. But then you're here for a couple of days, you work in the kitchen or in the library, you speak up when you want to, and you get to thinking, here's exactly what you need. You can march if you want to, but here?" She turned a circle, sweeping it all in, cops included. "This is where we're rebooting history."

So it seemed on my last day at Liberty Plaza, the Sunday following last month's freak snowstorm. "What will happen in the winter?" has been a refrain almost as incessant as the drumming. The answer, of course, is that nobody knows. Nobody has "known" anything that would happen so far. Maybe they will endure; maybe they will retreat; maybe Mayor Bloomberg will, like the mayors of Oakland and Denver, attack with gas and horses. "Subzero sleeping bags" are a topic of constant conversation, three words murmured or proclaimed with defiance and shivers. The morning after the big snow, I expected to find the occupiers blue-lipped and worried. Right before the storm, the city had confiscated their generators, used for emergency heat, among other things, and the bicycle-powered batteries they'd been building for just such a contingency were not yet ready to pedal. The wet snow collapsed tents, and the wind blew away tarps and signs and extra clothing. Copies of the *Occupied Wall Street Journal* whipped up into the night and plastered sidewalks.

But as I made my way to the park the next morning, the camp was sparkling. The snow had melted, tents clean, books dry, jeans strung on clotheslines. The kitchen was serving up roast turkey for all comers. And they came from everywhere, occupiers and street people and tourists, drawn, like me, to what they'd thought would be a scene of disaster. Some of the tourists picked up signs. "I guess I am the 99 percent," said an electrical engineer from New Jersey. An elegantly dressed white-haired woman leapt at a chance to work in the kitchen: "I can do that," she declared. Another woman brought a bag of helium-filled yellow balloons. The drummers, led by a dark-skinned man whose face was hidden by a green bandanna, sounded energized, as if the night's cold had taught them all a new, less angry rhythm, like they were laughing behind their bandannas. That night, the General Assembly would be dedicated to a battle over demands; but that morning, the first of what will likely be a long and hard winter at Liberty, was a reprieve, a fantasy, a multitude, an imaginary city raising its flags. 



HOW I STOPPED WORRYING AND LEARNED TO LOVE THE PROTESTS

By Matt Taibbi

HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE. AT FIRST, I MISUNDERSTOOD Occupy Wall Street.

The first few times I went down to Zuccotti Park, I came away with mixed feelings. I loved the energy and was amazed by the obvious organic appeal of the movement, the way it was growing on its own. But my initial impression was that it would not be taken very seriously by the Citibanks and Goldman Sachs of the world. You could put 50,000 angry protesters on Wall Street, 100,000 even, and Lloyd Blankfein is probably not going to break a sweat. He knows he's not going to wake up tomorrow and see Cornel West or Richard Trumka running the Federal Reserve. He knows modern finance is a giant mechanical parasite that only an expert surgeon can remove. Yell and scream all you want, but he and his fellow financial Frankensteins are the only ones who know how to turn the machine off.

That's what I was thinking during the first few weeks of the protests. But I'm beginning to see another angle. Occupy Wall Street was always about something much bigger than a movement against big banks and modern finance. It's about providing a forum for people to show how tired they are not just of Wall Street, but *everything*. This is a visceral, impassioned, deep-seated rejection of the entire direction of our society, a refusal to take even one more step forward into the shallow commercial abyss of phoniness, short-term calculation, withered idealism and intellectual bankruptcy that American mass society has become. If there is such a thing as going on strike from one's own culture, this is it. And by being so broad in scope and so elemental in its motivation, it's flown over the heads of many on both the right and the left.

The right-wing media wasted no time in cannon-blasting the movement with its usual idiotic clichés, casting Occupy Wall Street as a bunch of dirty hippies who should get a job and stop chewing up Mike Bloomberg's police overtime budget with their urban sleepovers. Just like they did a half-century ago, when the debate over the Vietnam War somehow stopped being about why we were brutally murdering millions of innocent Indochinese civilians and instead became a referendum on bralessness and long hair and flower-child rhetoric, the depraved flacks of the right-wing media have breezily blown off a generation of fraud and corruption and market-perverting bailouts, making the whole debate about the protesters themselves – their hygiene, their “envy” of the rich, their “hypocrisy.”

The protesters, chirped Supreme Reichskank Ann Coulter, needed three things: “showers, jobs and a point.” Her colleague Charles Krauthammer went so far as to label the protesters hypocrites for having *iPhones*. OWS, he said, is “Starbucks-sipping, Levi's-clad, iPhone-clutching protesters [denouncing] corporate America even as they weep for Steve Jobs, corporate titan, billionaire eight times over.” Apparently, because Goldman and Citibank are corporations, no protester can ever consume a corporate product – not jeans, not cellphones and definitely not coffee – if he also wants to complain about tax money going to pay off some billionaire banker's bets against his own crappy mortgages.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the political spectrum, there were scads of progressive pundits like me who wrung our hands with worry that OWS was playing right into the hands of assholes like Krauthammer. *Don't give them any ammunition!* we counseled. *Stay on message! Be specific!* We were all playing

the Rorschach-test game with OWS, trying to squint at it and see what we wanted to see in the movement. Viewed through the prism of our desire to make near-term, within-the-system changes, it was hard to see how skirmishing with cops in New York would help foreclosed-upon middle-class families in Jacksonville and San Diego.

What both sides missed is that OWS is tired of all of this. They don't care what we think they're about, or should be about. They just want something different.

We're all born wanting the freedom to imagine a better and more beautiful future. But modern America has become a place so dreadfully confining and predictable that it chokes the life out of that built-in desire. Everything from our pop culture to our economy to our politics feels oppressive and unresponsive. We see 10 million commercials a day, and every day is the same life-killing chase for money, money and more money; the only thing that changes from minute to minute is that every tick of the clock brings with it another space-age vendor dreaming up some new way to try to sell you something or reach into your pocket. The relentless sameness of the two-party political system is beginning to feel like a *Jacob's Ladder* nightmare with no end; we're entering another turn on the four-year merry-go-round, and the thought of having to try to get excited about yet another minor quadrennial shift in the direction of one or the other pole of alienating corporate full-of-shitness is enough to make anyone want to smash his own hand flat with a hammer.

If you think of it this way, Occupy Wall Street takes on another meaning. There's no better symbol of the gloom and psychological repression of modern America than the banking system, a huge heartless machine that attaches itself to you at an early age, and from which there is no escape. You fail to receive a few past-due notices about a \$19 payment you missed on that TV you bought at Circuit City, and next thing you know a collector has filed a judgment against you for \$3,000 in fees and interest. Or maybe you wake up one morning and your car is gone, legally repossessed by Vulture Inc., the debt-buying firm that bought your loan on the Internet from Chase for two cents on the dollar. This is why people hate Wall Street. They hate it because the banks have made life for ordinary people a vicious tightrope act; you slip anywhere along the way, it's 10,000 feet down into a vat of razor blades that you can never climb out of.

That, to me, is what Occupy Wall Street is addressing. People don't know exactly what they want, but as one friend of mine put it, they know one thing: *FUCK THIS SHIT!* We want something different: a different life, with different values, or at least a *chance* at different values.

There was a lot of snickering in media circles, even by me, when I heard the protesters talking about how Liberty Square was offering a model for a new society, with free food and health care and so on. Obviously, a bunch of kids taking donations and giving away free food is not a long-term model for a new economic system.

But now, I get it. People want to go someplace for at least five minutes where no one is trying to bleed you or sell you something. It may not be a real model for anything, but it's at least a place where people are free to dream of some other way for human beings to get along, beyond auctioned "democracy," tyrannical commerce and the bottom line.

We're a nation that was built on a thousand different utopian ideas, from the Shakers to the Mormons to New Harmony, Indiana. It was possible, once, for communities to experiment with everything from free love to an end to private property. But now-

adays even the palest federalism is swiftly crushed. If your state tries to place tariffs on companies doing business with some notorious human-rights-violator state - like Massachusetts did, when it sought to bar state contracts to firms doing business with Myanmar - the decision will be overturned by some distant global bureaucracy like the WTO. Even if 40 million Californians vote tomorrow to allow themselves to smoke a joint, the federal government will never permit it. And the economy is run almost entirely by an unaccountable oligarchy in Lower Manhattan that absolutely will not sanction any innovations in banking or debt forgiveness or anything else that might lessen its predatory influence.

And here's one more thing I was wrong about: I originally was very uncomfortable with the way the protesters were focusing on the NYPD as symbols of the system. After all, I thought, these are just working-class guys from the Bronx and Staten Island who have never seen the inside of a Wall Street investment firm, much less had anything to do with the corruption of our financial system.


But I was wrong. The police in their own way are symbols of the problem. All over the country, thousands of armed cops have been deployed to stand around and surveil and even assault the polite crowds of Occupy protesters. This deployment of law-enforcement resources already dwarfs the amount of money and

manpower that the government "committed" to fighting crime and corruption during the financial crisis. One OWS protester steps in the wrong place, and she immediately has police roping her off like wayward cattle. But in the skyscrapers above the protests, anything goes.

This is a profound statement about who law enforcement works for in this country. What happened on Wall Street over the past decade was an unparalleled crime wave. Yet at most, maybe 1,500 federal agents were policing that beat - and that little group of financial cops barely made any cases at all. Yet when thousands of ordinary people hit the streets with the express purpose of obeying the law and demonstrating their patriotism through peaceful protest, the police response is immediate and massive. There

have already been hundreds of arrests, which is hundreds more than we ever saw during the years when Wall Street bankers were stealing billions of dollars from retirees and mutual-fund holders and carpenters unions through the mass sales of fraudulent mortgage-backed securities.

It's not that the cops outside the protests are doing wrong, per se, by patrolling the parks and sidewalks. It's that they should be somewhere else. They should be heading up into those skyscrapers and going through the file cabinets to figure out who stole what, and from whom. They should be helping people get their money back. Instead, they're out on the street, helping the Blankfeins of the world avoid having to answer to the people they ripped off.

People want out of this fiendish system, rigged to inexorably circumvent every hope we have for a more balanced world. They want major changes. I think I understand now that this is what the Occupy movement is all about. It's about dropping out, if only for a moment, and trying something new, the same way that the civil rights movement of the 1960s strived to create a "beloved community" free of racial segregation. Eventually the Occupy movement will need to be specific about how it wants to change the world. But for right now, it just needs to grow. And if it wants to sleep on the streets for a while and not structure itself into a traditional campaign of grassroots organizing, it should. It doesn't need to tell the world what it wants. It is succeeding, for now, just by being something different. 

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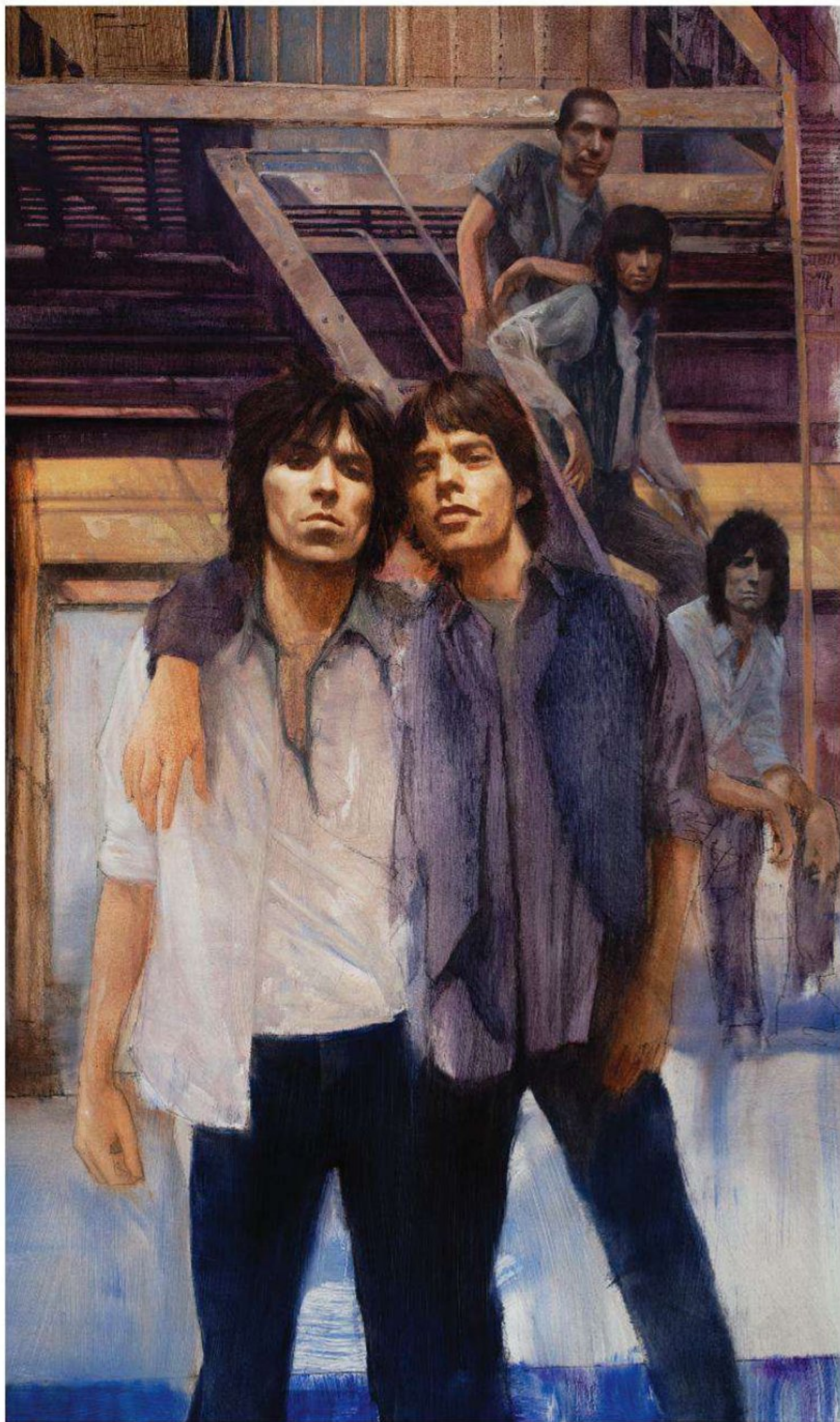
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The Stones reopen the vaults to expand a tough, trashy classic

The Rolling Stones ★★★★★

Some Girls: Deluxe Edition
Universal Republic

BY ROB SHEFFIELD



"I really like girls an awful lot," Mick Jagger confided to *ROLLING STONE* in 1978. "And I don't think I'd say anything really nasty about any of them." And yet the eternal kick of *Some Girls* is that Mick has a deliciously nasty word or two for everybody. Just when the Stones seemed to be fading away, they shadoobied back to life with some of their toughest songs ever: the punk sleaze of "Shattered," the soulful Keithness of "Beast of Burden," the late-night-disco desolation of the chart-topping "Miss You." The result was the Rolling Stones' funniest, trashiest, bitchiest LP – an all-time classic that remains their biggest-selling record.

So how do you improve an album like this? How about making it twice as long? This edition has 12 outtakes, most of which have been hoarded on bootlegs by Stones fanatics for years. Some of the bonus tracks are nearly as hot as the originals; certainly they live up to the *Some Girls* spirit, from the cheeky piano lament "Petrol Blues" to Keith Richards' tender Nashville cover "We Had It All."

The *Some Girls* sessions were famously productive – mostly just the five Stones and engineer Chris Kimsey holed up in a Paris studio cutting dozens of songs. Some of the leftovers landed on later

albums – see “Hang Fire” or “Black Limousine,” both of which resurfaced on *Tattoo You* – while others were unfinished until now. The outtakes get refurbished with guitar overdubs and Mick’s new vocals. But as on last year’s *Exile on Main St.* reissue, the touch-ups usually improve bootleg versions – see “No Spare Parts,” a twang-soul truck-stop reverie that finally gets the full-on Mick vocal it always deserved.

The best find is “Do You Think I Really Care,” a countrified ramble through New York nightlife driven by Ronnie Wood’s pedal steel and Charlie Watts’ drums. Mick chases an erotic mirage all over the city, from the D train to Max’s Kansas City. Who else but the Stones could blow off a song this great?

“Claudine” is one of their most notorious lost tunes, a Chuck Berry-style rocker lampooning the Claudine Longet/Spider Sabich scandal. Over ragged guitars, Mick dishes about a Vegas singer who shot her Olympic-skier boyfriend. It might be a libel lawyer’s cream dream (“Blood in the chalet, blood in the snow/She washed her hands of the whole damn show”), but it holds up as a funny satire of tawdry American celebrity – a condition the Stones knew well by this point.

You can hear Mick and Keith rediscover their Glimmer Twins chemistry, whether it’s a blues groove like “When You’re Gone” or a romp through the rockabilly chestnut “Tallahassee Lassie.” (And this is just a taste of the treasures still in the vault – where the hell is “Fiji Jim”?) The whole package catches the Stones on a roll, thriving on the punk and funk energy in the air, with Mick driving the music and playing more guitar than ever. It’s the ultimate version of the album that invented the Stones we’ve known ever since: mean, vital, gloriously unrepentant.

Key Tracks: “Do You Think I Really Care,” “Beast of Burden”



LISTEN NOW!

Hear key tracks from these albums at rollingstone.com/albums.

An Art-Rock Godmother Returns

The Brit diva is back with a sublimely strange album and help from Sir Elton

Kate Bush ★★★★★½

50 Words for Snow *Anti-*



“I was born in a cloud,” begins “Snowflake,” a nine-minute meditation over roiling piano that opens Kate Bush’s first album of new material in six years. Slowly, you realize its skyscraping vocals are mostly not hers at all; they belong to

her 12-year-old son, Bertie. It’s a provocative sleight of hand on an LP that finds a universe of emotions in its wintry theme – a sort of virtual snow globe. Bush’s own voice has appealing new cracks, and she’s evidently been studying American soul; the music, meanwhile, is full of plush, drifts of ambience. The vocals sound nothing like the fierce cyberbabe on her 1982 LP *The Dreaming*, or the strange angels on *Hounds of Love*, but they are no less sublime.

A duet with Elton John, “Snowed in at Wheeler Street,” recalls her 1986 Peter Gabriel collaboration “Don’t Give Up,” except it’s weirder, with a time-traveling story line and avant-techno pulse. “Misty” turns snowman-making into a breathtakingly sexy act – “I can feel him melting in my hand,” she moans, as if singing the blues for a missed orgasm. Bush’s 2005 comeback, *Aerial*, seemed to ponder her place in the 21st-century pop world she helped shape (see Florence Welch, Björk, etc.). Here, she sounds utterly at home defining her own world. It’s an amazing place.

Key Tracks: “Snowed in at Wheeler Street,” “Snowflake”

WILL HERMES



WINTER WONDERLAND
Snow is Bush’s first album of new material in six years.

R.E.M. ★★★★★½
Part Lies, Part Heart, Part Truth, Part Garbage
1982-2011 Warner Bros.

A 40-track farewell from one of alt-rock’s greatest bands



No better time than a breakup for a long goodbye: R.E.M.’s eighth compila-

tion LP is a 40-song blowout. Chronological evenhandedness short-shrifts their vaunted 1980s but shows that their confused past 15 years did produce some Georgia peaches – see “Leaving New York” and “Überlin,” which give the dreaminess of their early days a mournful cast. There are also three songs recorded after 2011’s *Collapse Into Now*: “A Month of Saturdays” is Green-like dance rock; “We All Go Back to Where We Belong” goes to breakup-ballad heaven; and “Hallelujah” is a forlorn art-pop meltdown with Michael Stipe and Mike Mills sharing one last golden yodel before receding into the great beyond.

JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: “Hallelujah,” “What’s the Frequency, Kenneth?”

Atlas Sound

★★★★½

Parallax *4AD*

Woozy, tuneful indie guy is ready for his close-up



Deerhunter frontman Bradford Cox used to bury his voice under raging feedback

swells or oceans of whooshing reverb. But he’s grown far more confident in recent years – and on his third solo disc, Cox takes another step in the direction of unabashed pop, singing about modern love in a molten-candy croon that could almost belong to a Fifties teen idol. He uses his newfound swagger to sell a set of surprisingly sticky hooks: Nearly every tune features a bright, immediate melody, leaving behind the diffuse musings he’s favored in the past. Cox values songwriting ahead of texture these days, and the effort is paying off.

SIMON VOZICK-LEVINSON

Key Tracks: “Mona Lisa,” “My Angel Is Broken”

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TOP SINGLES

Guided by Voices ★★★ "The Unsinkable Fats Domino"

A cryptic ode to an iconic rock pianist, the first new tune from the reunited band's hailed 1993-96 lineup is bouncy, brief and brimming with playful rhymes. If you love one GBV song, you're bound to like a hundred more, and this one delivers familiar thrills.

MATTHEW PERPETUA

Mazzy Star ★★★★★ "Common Burn"

The Los Angeles duo's first single in 15 years is pure country-rock haze: nodding harmonica, shivering electric guitar and Hope Sandoval's voice - angel, lover, hallucination of your mom speaking to you in utero. It's like they never left.

WILL HERMES

Far East Movement ★★★★★ "Jello"

The hip-housers known for getting "slizzard" on "Like a G6" return with a brassy Rye Rye to demand booty-shaking over Tetris-worthy synths and bring high-low absurdism to hashtag rap: "Play with your G-string/Cello." Condolences to Yo-Yo Ma.

MONICA HERRERA

Nada Surf ★★★★½ "When I Was Young"

A Fleet Fox-y tune that ramps into a slow-mo rocker, the trio's new track flashes back to salad days but savors a grown-up present, where "aimless dreaming has found a target" and true love - with afternoon quickies! - beckons. Youth: still somewhat overrated.

W.H.



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Marcus Mumford

Mumford & Sons Grab Onto Sweet Sorrow

Mumford & Sons ★★★½ "Ghosts That We Knew"

Only a fool would mess with the formula that led to Mumford & Sons' junior-Coldplay coronation last year - and all signs indicate that the British alt-folk sensations have no intention of doing so on the follow-up to their sleeper smash debut LP, *Sigh No More*. Take their latest appetizer, a dolorous ballad that they previewed at a recent radio performance. "Ghosts That We Knew" (or maybe just "Ghosts") opens with soft acoustic fingerpicking and a typically careworn vocal from frontman

Marcus Mumford: "You saw my pain washed out in the rain," he murmurs, bruised but still wanting to believe. His bandmates join in with ragged harmonies on the chorus - "I will hope as long as you like," Mumford pleads, "just promise me we'll be all right" - and their twangy contributions on banjo and accordion further the Appalachia-via-London catharsis. When Mumford's voice strains and sputters in the final refrain, it only makes him sound more passionate.

SIMON VOZICK-LEVINSON

Mary J.'s Bad Romance

Mary J. Blige feat. Drake ★★★ "Mr. Wrong"

Drama is still Mary J. Blige's best friend on record. "Even though he breaks my heart so bad, we got a special thing going on," she cries out on the latest single from *My Life II... The Journey Continues (Act I)*, telling the kind of addled-love story fit for her weary soul. The headstrong groove of Blige's early ballads syncs up surprisingly well with the hollowed-out R&B of guest Drake, who sounds keenly aware, if not really conflicted, that the best kind of leading man in Blige's world is a lowdown creep: "They fall victim to my system/Guess I sure know how to pick 'em."

M.H.

Hold Steady's Finn Rolls On

Craig Finn ★★★½ "Honolulu Blues"/ "Rented Room"

Earlier this year, while the Hold Steady were on vacation, their workaholic frontman, Craig Finn, decamped to Austin to record a low-key solo LP steeped in the literate roots rock of his native Midwest. This seven-inch single is our first glimpse: "Honolulu Blues" is an artfully shambling Seventies boogie with plenty of dust on its mudflaps and loads of Catholic guilt tearing at its transmission, while "Rented Room" is a post-breakup blues on which Finn rolls out elegantly frayed guitar majesty that suggests he's more than just a brilliant lyricist.

JON DOLAN

BOOTLEG

Led Zeppelin Shepperton Studios, Surrey, England, December 5th, 2007

Five days before Led Zeppelin's epic one-night-only reunion concert at London's O2 Arena, the band ran through its entire set at a rehearsal space in Surrey. A pristine soundboard of the rehearsal just recently leaked online, and unlike the muddy audience tapes that emerged from the actual show, it's a must-hear for fans. Every note rings clear, and despite a few glitches - Jimmy Page's guitar isn't quite high enough in the mix, "Misty



Plant

Mountain Hop" cuts off after nearly three minutes and "No Quarter" stops suddenly after John Paul Jones' dramatic organ intro - the rest of the set is complete. There's even some bonus goofing off: After Robert Plant sings the "Stairway to Heaven" lyric "The forests will echo with laughter," a faraway voice yells out his old onstage ad-lib: "Does anybody remember laughter?" An incredible 10-and-a-half-minute version of "Dazed and Confused" is the real highlight, though. It's a shame that Led Zeppelin never took this reunion show on the road.

ANDY GREENE

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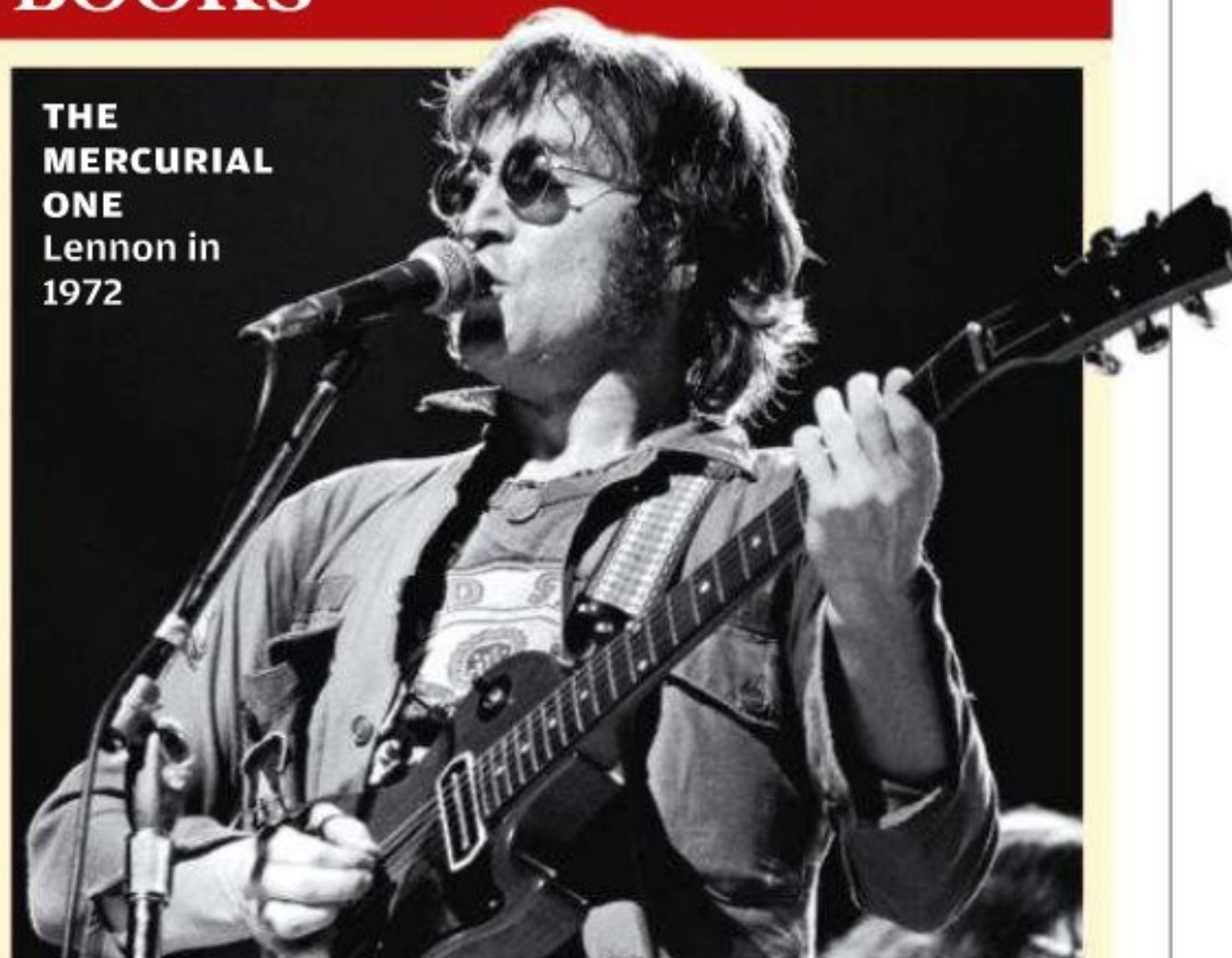
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THE MERCURIAL ONE
Lennon in 1972



Gimme Some Truth

New bio is the most reliable guide yet to Lennon's messy life and musical genius



Lennon ★★★★★^{1/2}

By **Tim Riley** *Hyperion*

At this point, any book about John Lennon is also, necessarily, about the truckload of previous Lennon bios. Tim Riley's mission seems in part to be to supplant Albert Goldman's notorious *The Lives of John Lennon*, which Riley has called "hysterically tabloid." *Lennon: The Man, the Myth, the Music - The Definitive Life*, Riley's

784-page brick of a biography, does this handily, and a lot more.

This is no exercise in hero worship: Lennon was a complex man haunted by traumas, including an incident when his parents asked him, at age five, to choose between them (he ultimately lost them both). Riley draws these early years vividly, making connections to Lennon's relationships with friends (Stu Sutcliffe, whom Lennon once beat bloody), lovers (Yoko Ono, whom he called "Mother") and those in between (Brian Epstein, one of numerous father figures). What prevents this psychoanalysis from becoming insufferable is Riley's journalistic rigor. He parses contradictory data, confirming and debunking. It can get wonky - you may not care that the exact length of a holiday Lennon took with his dad in 1946 "is in dispute." But the result comes off as the most reliable, least star-struck volume on Lennon to date.

Riley is a keen music critic, and his analysis here is what distinguishes this bio. Sgt. Pepper's "Good Morning Good Morning" is "a dystopian cornflake jingle"; "That Means a Lot" is a "miraculous arc of feeling" in which "the swells in the middle eight expand in the fade-out as McCartney hints at 'Hey Jude' vocal glories." He is also a superb aggregator (essential in our data-surplus era), culling the best bits from the sagging shelves of Beatlesology. Amplifying, humanizing, *Lennon* helps you hear the man's music anew - and given its omnipresence, that's pretty amazing.

WILL HERMES



Luck and Circumstance

★★★★^{1/2}

By **Michael Lindsay-Hogg** *Knopf*

To many people, the hook for this memoir about the British director is his recent confirmation that Orson Welles was his biological father. But for fans of the Beatles and the Stones, the hook is the inside story on *Let It Be* and *The Rolling*

Stones Rock and Roll Circus. Hogg directed both movies, and it was his idea to stage the Beatles' rooftop concert. "They were happy, dispute and rancor forgotten," he writes. "In the forty minutes we were up there, on that cold winter's day, they rocked and rolled and connected as they had in years gone by."

ANDY GREENE

John Prine

★★★★½

The Singing Mailman
Delivers *Oh Boy*

A future folk star's
working-guy early days



Before John Prine's 1971 debut got him dubbed the next Dylan, he was a Chicago mailman playing his homespun folk tunes at an open mic. These two discs contain a radio appearance and a live set right before he went national (the title is the headline of a review by Roger Ebert). It's a fine introduction to a richly imagistic Midwestern everyguy whose languid good nature defied singer-songwriter smugness – from the stoner anthem "Illegal Smile" to "Great Society Conflict Veteran's Blues" (later renamed "Sam Stone"), during which the audience joins Prine's brokenhearted chorus, "There's a hole in Daddy's arm where all the money goes," with a lamenting familiarity. **JON DOLAN**

Key Tracks: "Illegal Smile," "Spanish Pipedream"

Disco Inferno

★★★★★

The 5 EPs *One Little Indian*

Heady early rumblings from
undersung Brit innovators



The 1994 LP *D.I. Go Pop* was a shot heard 'round the corner, if that: a lost masterpiece of evocative blur channeling Joy Division's melodic gloom through My Bloody Valentine's blissful noise-swarms, with sample loops outgunning the guitars. It was born from the prescient EPs collected here, all recorded by the London trio Disco Inferno between 1992 and 1994. Yearning vocals battle the din; "Summer's Last Sound" is built on bass and birdcalls. Elsewhere, shattering glass forms a rhythm; song structures coalesce and dissolve. It's a chance for new futurists to discover what they're still catching up to. **WILL HERMES**

Key Tracks: "Summer's Last Sound," "It's a Kid's World"

Rush

★★★★½

Time Machine 2011: Live
in Cleveland *Roadrunner*

Prog warriors cut a de facto
greatest-hits LP – live!



A year after the documentary *Beyond the Lighted Stage* made them more popular and beloved than ever, how do Rush choose to celebrate? How else but a concert album subtitled *Live in Cleveland*? Sampling the Canadian trio's career – from the prog ("La Villa Strangiato") to the pop ("The Spirit of Radio") and back to the prog ("2112 Overture/The Temples of Syrinx") – it complements their simultaneously released live remake of *Moving Pictures*, their biggest LP. It's no slight to Geddy Lee's vocal steez that the highlight of both packages is "YYZ," Rush's instrumental tribute to their hometown of Toronto – perhaps the only city that could have spawned this most quintessentially Canadian of bands. **ROB SHEFFIELD**

Key Tracks: "YYZ," "La Villa Strangiato," "The Spirit of Radio"

Wale

★★★★★

Ambition Warner Bros./
Maybach Music Group

D.C. rapper turns gaze to the
glitzy life, with mixed results



Wale's career had all but stalled last year – until the D.C. rapper won another bite at the apple by signing to Rick Ross' label. On his second LP (and first since he started rapping about strip clubs instead of *Seinfeld*), he takes advantage of the do-over, lacing expensive-sounding beats from the likes of Diplo and Lex Luger with dialed-in flows. He's too quick to reach for sexist clichés; cheap shots at groupies and gold diggers undercut moments of real emotion. What Wale lusts for most of all is respect. "Fuck fame, fuck money," he declares. "I'm just trying to be legendary." Someday, maybe, but not quite yet. **SIMON VOZICK-LEVINSON**

Key Tracks: "White Linen (Coolin)," "Slight Work"

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Inside Pete Townshend's Mod Odyssey

The Who's other (and better) rock opera - plus two discs of illuminating demos

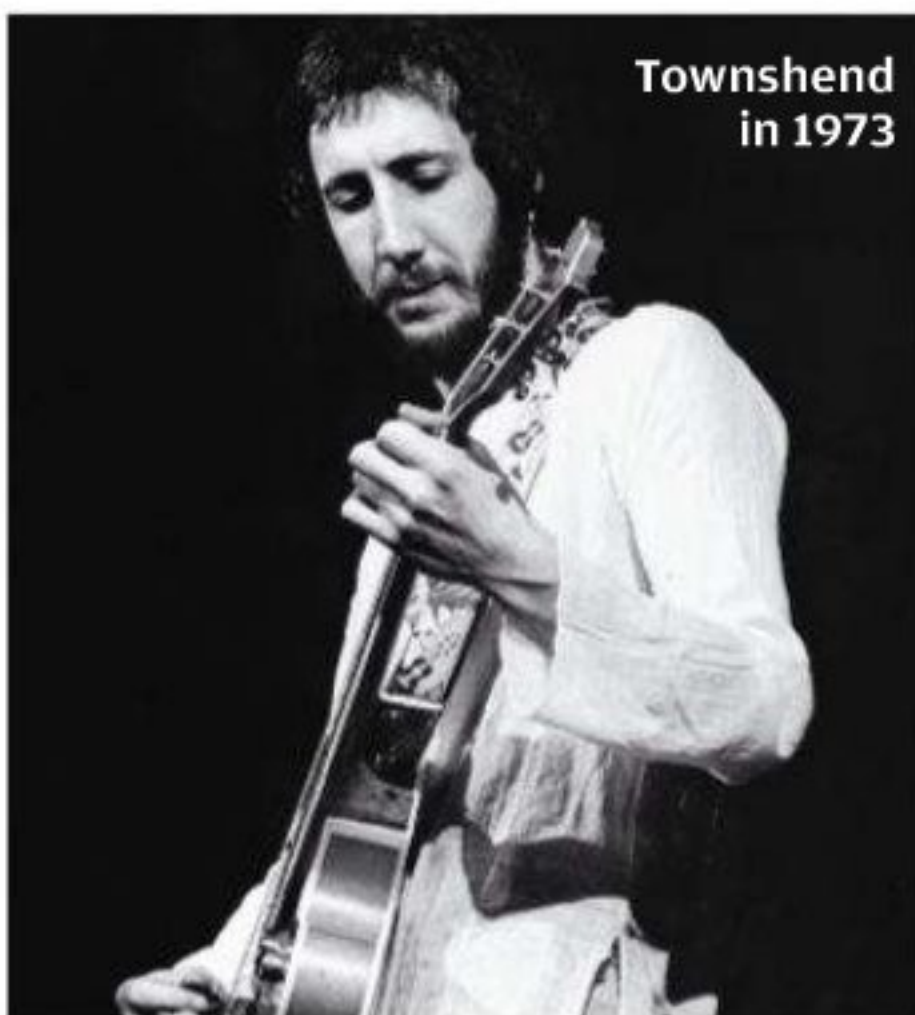
The Who ★★★★★^{1/2}

Quadrophenia: The Director's Cut
Universal



Tommy was first. The Who's 1969 opera legitimized the improbable union of rock abandon and extended narrative, and marked guitarist Pete Townshend's great leap forward as a composer and as his band's conceptual general. But *Quadrophenia*, released in 1973, was a superior tale with more-taut songwriting; it was grounded in Townshend's memories of growing up angry, anguished and mod in the early Sixties, and produced with the panoramic tension of *Who's Next*. *Tommy* was precedent; *Quadrophenia* was coherent spectacle. At the time, Roger Daltrey claimed his vocals were too low in the mix. In this remastered edition, when he hits the "Out of my brain" chorus over Keith Moon's runaway drum rolls and John Entwistle's thunder-

Key Tracks:
"5:15," "The Real Me (Demo)," "Joker James"



clap bass in "5:15," you clearly hear the singer - and his lyricist - going off the rails.

Quadrophenia was the redemption of Townshend's long-form dreams after the collapse of his intended *Tommy* follow-up, the multimedia beast *Lifehouse*. Like his deaf, dumb and blind kid in *Tommy*, Townshend's scooter boy Jimmy (a composite of the four personalities in the Who) finds identity, then disappointment in cult life: the top-dog mod reduced to carrying tourists' bags in "Bell Boy."

There is rebirth, too: the final, magisterial cleansing of "Love Reign O'er Me." But where Townshend wrote parts of *Tommy* in too-literal operatic form, he edited *Quadrophenia* with a film director's hand, evident in the two CDs of his original demos included in this box set. The tapes are fascinating for their detailed home-studio arrangements; the band replicated most of them with the appropriate fury. The demos also reveal what Townshend left out on the way to the '73 double LP, such as the ill-fitting verse about rock-star anxiety in "The Real Me" and a run of numbers in the first half - the teen-crush waltz "You Came Back" and an early character sketch, "Joker James" - that would have slowed down the action. Instead, on the LP, Townshend cut right from the kitchen-table revolt of "Cut My Hair" to the real generations' warfare in "The Punk and the Godfather."

It still sounds like the right decision. Like the subtitle here says, you get the work's birth in full, including an epic prose account by Townshend. But *Quadrophenia*, as delivered the first time, is still one of his, and the Who's, greatest albums - and the better opera.

DAVID FRICKE

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Daughtry ★★

Break the Spell *RCA*

More cheeseball rock ballads about really meaning it, man



American Idol's most successful male has reached cheesecake heights on two previous discs by getting with collaborators like Max Martin and Richard Marx. Here, Chris Daughtry seems to have been given more leeway in the songwriting department, so there's a rich give-and-take between his dedication to the emotional power of his material and how bad it is. Kelly Clarkson would turn down middling soft-rock ballads like "Outta My Head," but Daughtry sings them with conviction – perhaps because he knows it's never been the power of his words ("My heart, I wear it on my sleeve") but the depth of his schlocky conviction that gives a certain kind of lady the spells.

JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "Crazy," "Break the Spell"

Lisa Hannigan

★★★½ *Passenger ATO*

Irish folkie takes flight with ornate beauty, understated sex appeal



Lisa Hannigan evidently has a thing for birds. On her second solo album since leaving long-time collaborator Damien Rice, the Irish singer-songwriter nods lyrically to Leonard Cohen's "Bird on a Wire" ("Little Bird"), trills intimacies to someone named Bird ("Nowhere to Go") and stretches the word itself into ornate, melodic flight patterns ("Passenger"). There's kinship, to be sure: Her voice is light and agile, her phrasing like exquisite plumage, and her folksy songs move with deceptive power, sailing on guitars, strings and Irish drama. She's a main attraction now, although a pairing with Ray LaMontagne ("O Sleep") is a reminder of how sweet, and drop-dead sexy, a duet partner she can be. Fly on, sister. **WILL HERMES**

Key Tracks: "Knots," "O Sleep," "Passenger"



KEY FACTS

Hometown Kilcloon, County Meath, Ireland

Backstory After tweaking ears as the femme voice on Damien Rice's 2003 LP *O*, Hannigan left to cut her sparkling 2009 debut, *Sea Sew*.

Sounds Like Sexy art-folk songs played

loud in a smoky Dublin pub.

Watery, Fantastic In the "Little Bird" video, Hannigan is seemingly submerged in her bathtub, coming up for air only at the end. Beautiful and disturbing, not unlike her music.

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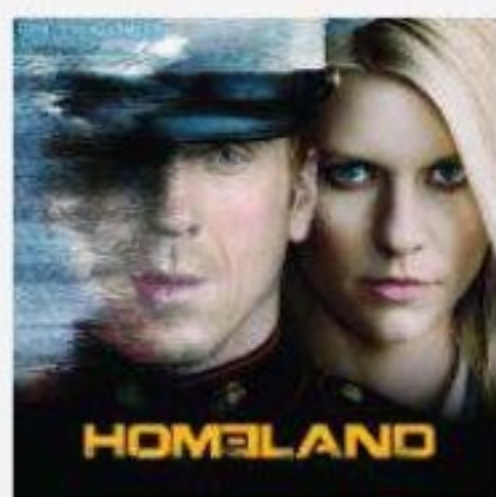
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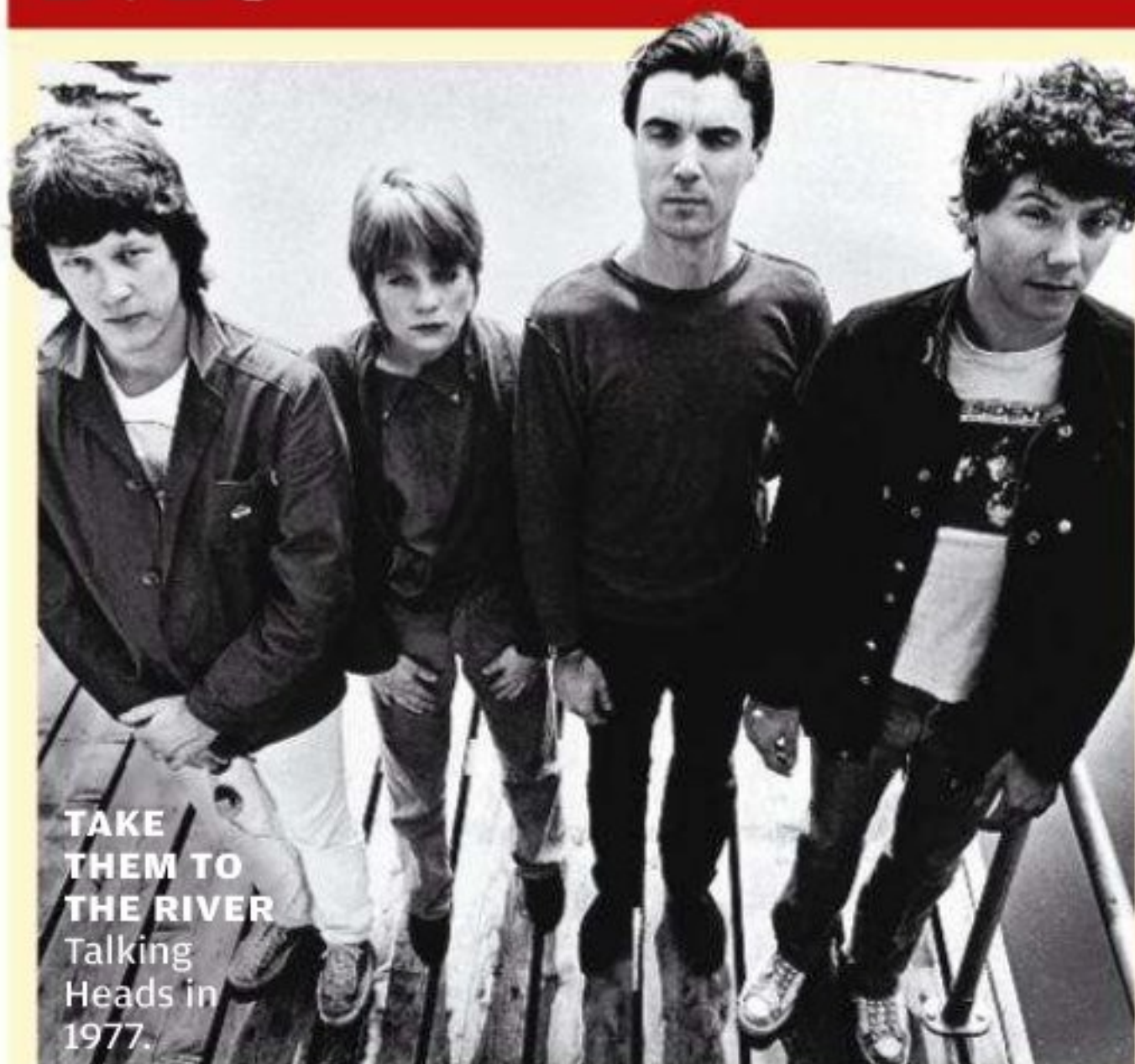
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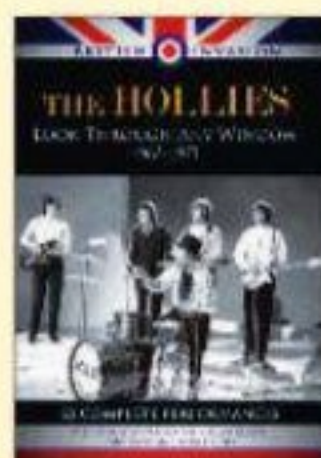
Talking Heads: Chronology

★★★★★ *Eagle Rock*

The transformation of Talking Heads from twitchy three-member art band to innovative nine-piece avant-funk extravaganza is one of music's most unexpected success stories. *Chronology* - the Heads' first-ever DVD anthology - charts that evolution with performances that differ radically from their

studio counterparts. The set runs from a 1975 CBGB gig to a 1983 *Letterman* appearance, tossing in surreal bits like a 1979 *American Bandstand* lip-sync of "Take Me to the River." Detailed band-member commentary proves illuminating, and bonuses include an abstract 1978 U.K. TV profile where frontman David Byrne confesses that he once wanted to dress like an average person, but found it required too much work. This is about as fun as experimental pop can get.

BARRY WALTERS



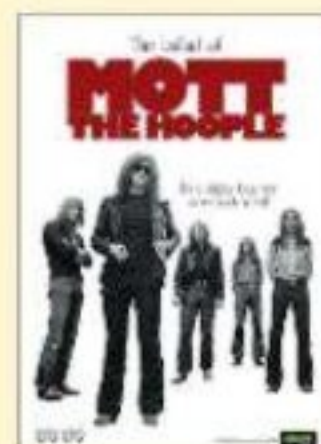
The Hollies: Look Through Any Window 1963-1975

★★★★★ *Eagle Vision*

This collection of crisply restored videos and TV and concert clips has an uncannily Folksmen-to-Spinal Tap quality to it. One minute, the Hollies are sweetly harmonizing in suits; an hour later, following psychedelic and lounge-ballad phases, Allan Clarke is flashing

a perm and chest hair while growling their faux-Creedence vamp "Long Cool Woman (In a Black Dress)." But what always mattered with the Hollies were exultant harmonies and effervescent songs, both on display here (along with interviews and tidbits like "Carrie Anne" being inspired by Marianne Faithfull). In the age of Auto-Tune, a clip of Clarke and bandmates Graham Nash and Tony Hicks gathered around a mic recording the vocals for "On a Carousel" is legitimately mind-blowing.

DAVID BROWNE



The Ballad of Mott the Hoople ★★★★★ *Start*

Despite U.K. fame for their wild live show, Mott the Hoople barely sold records and nearly broke up in 1972. Then David Bowie gave them "All the Young Dudes," which turned the shambolic proto-punks into glam icons. In this doc, Queen's Roger Taylor confesses that his band studied Mott's showmanship; the Clash's

Mick Jones describes worshipping Mott. Members came and went, and Mott's former Svengali, Guy Stevens, produced *London Calling* before OD'ing - a nadir in the group's complex and bitter-sweet tale.

B.W.

We Were Promised Jetpacks

★★★★½

In the Pit of the Stomach
FatCat

Scottish lads start ruckus, toss in astral guitars



The band's name is misleading. I expected twee indie mush when I saw these four Scots play songs from this album, their second, at a recent gig. What I got was a grand bruising: clear, plaintive vocals propelled by ascending-staccato guitars and hellbent dance-worthy rhythms, as if the Texas band Explosions in the Sky had shown up with New Order's singer and backfield. There is melody in this density too. "Medicine" is pop rubbed raw with distortion, while the long closer, "Pear Tree," builds with grace through noise to an exultant finish. **DAVID FRICKE**

Key Tracks: "Circles and Squares," "Pear Tree"

Pusha T ★★★★★½

Fear of God II

G.O.O.D Music/Decon

Clipse rapper battles bombast on solo EP



In the Cipse, Pusha T and brother Malice rode icy Neptunes beats to fame without compromising their drug-dealer narratives. But on this EP, Pusha employs dramatic Southern-rap synths and churning bass lines, and ends up getting outshined by guests like Kanye West. Pusha is too reserved to pull off the revamped sound—he's more Raekwon than Rick Ross, better suited to quick-tongued storytelling than to bombast. When he rhymes that "hip-hop bores me," it seems more confession than boast. **MATTHEW TRAMMELL**

Key Tracks: "I Still Wanna," "Amen," "Body Work"

Nickelback ★★★★★

Here and Now *Roadrunner*
Grunge titans get back to the depressing basics



On 2008's *Dark Horse*, Nickelback hired "Mutt" Lange to add pop slickness to their thick-necked bro grunge and ended up with half the sales of 2005's eight-times-platinum *All the Right Reasons*. So Chad Kroeger and the guys return to thudding essentials on their seventh disc: plodding anthems like "Bottoms Up" and "Everything I Wanna Do" make drinking and sex seem like shift work. Light creeps in on a handful of songs, including "When We Stand Together," a synthed-up toe-dip into social commentary that's as natural as Mitt Romney passing out Thanksgiving turkeys at a homeless shelter, but gets a couple of points for surveying life beyond the strip club. **JON DOLAN**

Key Tracks: "Don't Ever Let It End," "Bottoms Up"

Cosmo Jarvis ★★★★★

Is the World Strange or Am I Strange?

25th Frame/The End

Oversharing songwriter sings of girls, gay pirates



"Strange" isn't quite the word. "Hyper" is more like it. Cosmo Jarvis earned next-big-thing buzz with songs crammed to the bursting point with stories, slogans, jokes and puns. The music veers from skiffle to punk pop to "rap"; the lyrics take in cute girls and homosexual pirates. Jarvis is a gifted tunecrafter, but several songs clock in at more than five minutes, wearing out their welcome long before they've reached the halfway mark. Somebody get this young man an editor. **J.R.**

Key Tracks: "Gay Pirates," "The Talking Song"

Gym Class

Heroes ★★★★★½

The Papercut Chronicles II

Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen

A joyless slog through pop-rap purgatory



"I'm such a beautiful mess," Travie McCoy raps on his band's fifth LP. You might hear a mess, plain and simple. *The Papercut Chronicles II* is the year's most charmless album, 11 punishingly dull rock-rap tunes with hooks that would've sounded dated a decade ago. McCoy is a laughably inept MC, with cadences transparently modeled on Eminem. He's also a nonstop bellyacher, bitching about girls and scenesters, breaking the litany to compare himself to, um, Jesus. "I'm just trying to stay righteous," he raps. "Sometimes I see my own face in Christ's likeness." **JODY ROSEN**

Key Tracks: "Stereo Hearts," "Lazarus, Ze Gitan"

Childish Gambino ★★★★★

Camp *Glassnote*

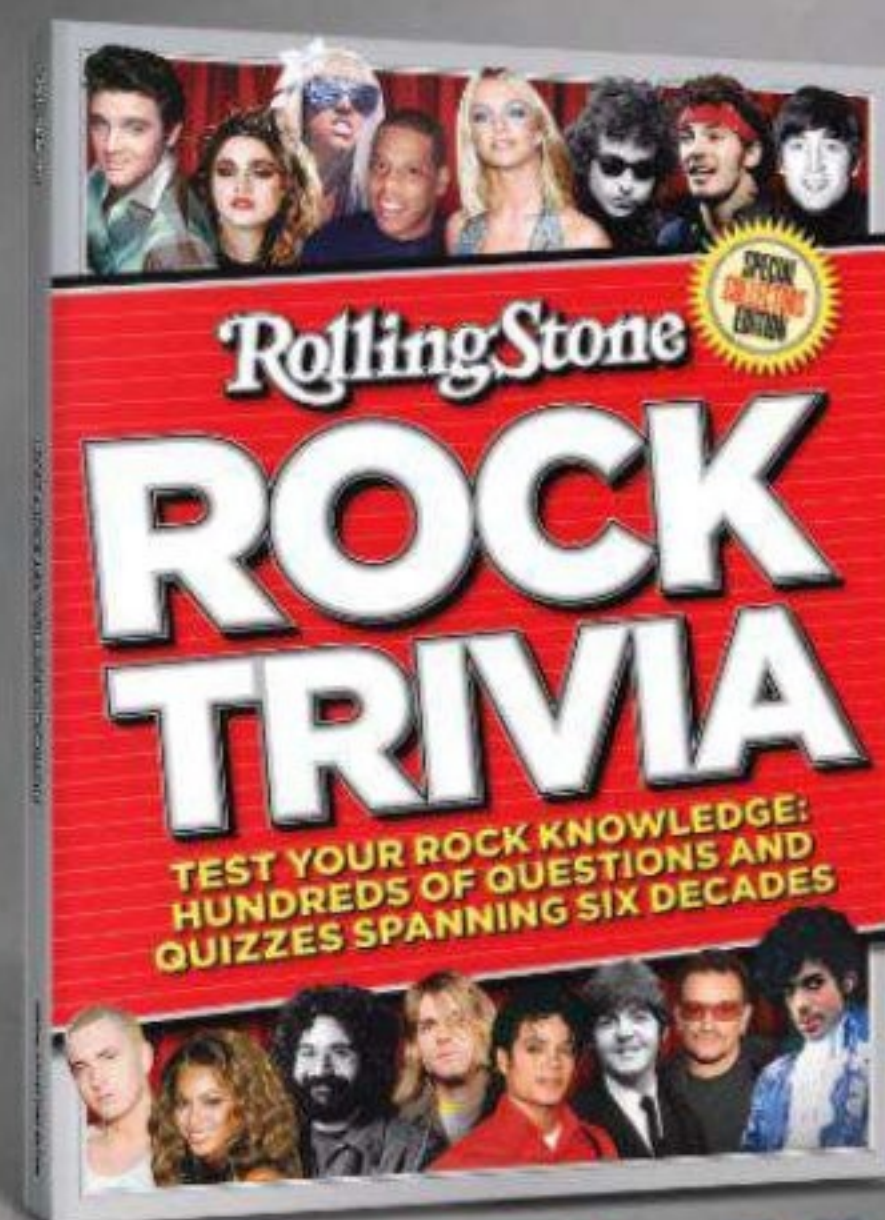
'Community' star shows off skills, neuroses



For a dude who gets big laughs on NBC's *Community*, Donald Glover sure fiends for approval on his debut. One minute he's dropping hornball come-ons, the next he's arguing that a "nerdy-ass black kid" deserves to rap at all. There are breathless zingers: "I sound weird like nigga with a hard 'r,'" he raps on the bare-bones synth jam "Bonfire," one of the few beats on this mostly self-produced album that doesn't copycat Kanye West's *Dark Twisted Fantasy*. As Kanye will be glad to tell you, there's only one Yeezy. **MONICA HERRERA**

Key Tracks: "Bonfire," "Kids (Keep Up)"

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HAWAIIAN EYES
George Clooney and Shailene Woodley, as his daughter, hit a bumpy road.

Clooney's Personal Best

As a dad in crisis, George Clooney drives his film into a hot Oscar race **By Peter Travers**

The Descendants

★★★★

George Clooney

Directed by Alexander Payne

IF THERE'S SOMETHING fundamentally wrong with *The Descendants*, I can't find it. What I see ranks high on the list of the year's best films. Director Alexander Payne is a master of the human comedy, of the funny, moving and messy details that define a fallible life. In adapting the 2009 novel by Kauai Hart Hemmings, Payne and co-screenwriters Nat Faxon and Jim Rash have given George Clooney the context to deliver the finest, truest and most emotionally raw performance of his career. Clooney has never exposed himself to the camera this openly, downplaying the star glamour and easy charm. Even the laughs come with a sting.

Don't worry. *The Descendants* isn't *Hamlet* or anything with crowns. Still, Clooney's Matt King, a workaholic semi-schlub of a Honolulu attorney, is descended from royal blood: His great-great-grandmother was a Hawaiian princess who married a *haole* (white) bank-

er and passed on a rich chunk of real estate. As the primary beneficiary of 25,000 acres of Kauai paradise, Matt must decide to keep the land unspoiled or sell it to developers to please an army of cousins, led by a hilariously greedy Beau Bridges.

Matt also has personal issues. A boating accident has left his neglected wife, Elizabeth (Patricia Hastie), in a coma and left Matt (the self-proclaimed "backup parent") in charge of their two daughters, sass queen Scottie (Amara Miller, a firecracker), 10, and seen-it-all Alexandra (Shailene Woodley), 17, whose reckless ways with boys and drugs has landed her in boarding school. Just when Matt steps it up as a husband and father, life blindsides him, first when he's informed that Elizabeth will never come out of her coma (should he pull the plug?), and when Alex tells him that Mom was cheating on him (should he dive into denial?).

I'll pause here to let you sneer at what sounds like TV soap slop. This is where Payne comes in. He walks the high wire between humor and heartbreak with unerring skill. No net. Just when you

think you have him figured, you haven't. The scene in which Alexandra sprawls on a sofa and slams her clueless dad with a catalog of domestic betrayals is devastating. Dynamite is the word for Woodley (TV's *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*), who deserves to join Clooney and the movie on the march to awards glory.

With the help of ace cinematographer Phedon Papamichael, Payne gives us a lived-in Hawaii, not the postcard version. As Matt says, the real power brokers "look like bums and stuntmen." Payne has a knack for digging deep. Look at the marvels he achieved in his first four movies (*Citizen Ruth*, *Election*, *About Schmidt*, *Sideways*). *The Descendants* puts Payne at five-for-five.

It's been seven years since Payne directed *Sideways*, but he hasn't lost his touch. I feared a cliché tsunami when Matt hauls the family, including Alexandra's stoner boyfriend, Sid (a terrific Nick Krause), off to Kauai to confront his wife's realtor lover, Brian Speer (a revelatory Matthew Lillard, a long way from *Scooby-Doo*). Instead, Payne turns the seem-

ingly banal into a vastly entertaining and acutely perceptive meditation on what defines family. The actors could not be better, from Robert Forster, as Matt's hardass father-in-law, to Judy Greer, who turns three scenes as Brian's cheated-on wife into an explosive tour de force. Payne knows Clooney's face makes a bruised and eloquent canvas. Matt ultimately speaks blunt truths to his comatose wife, his eyes reflecting long-buried ferocity and feeling. The film ends in family silence in what only appears to be a throwaway. With Payne, every beat counts. As the film's soundtrack deftly blends traditional and modern Hawaiian music, Payne provokes timeless questions about race, class, conscience and identity. Payne's low-key approach only deepens the film's intimate power. Want a movie you can really connect with? *The Descendants* is damn near perfect.



THE TRAVERS TAKE

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J. Edgar ★★ ★

Leonardo DiCaprio, Armie Hammer, Judi Dench

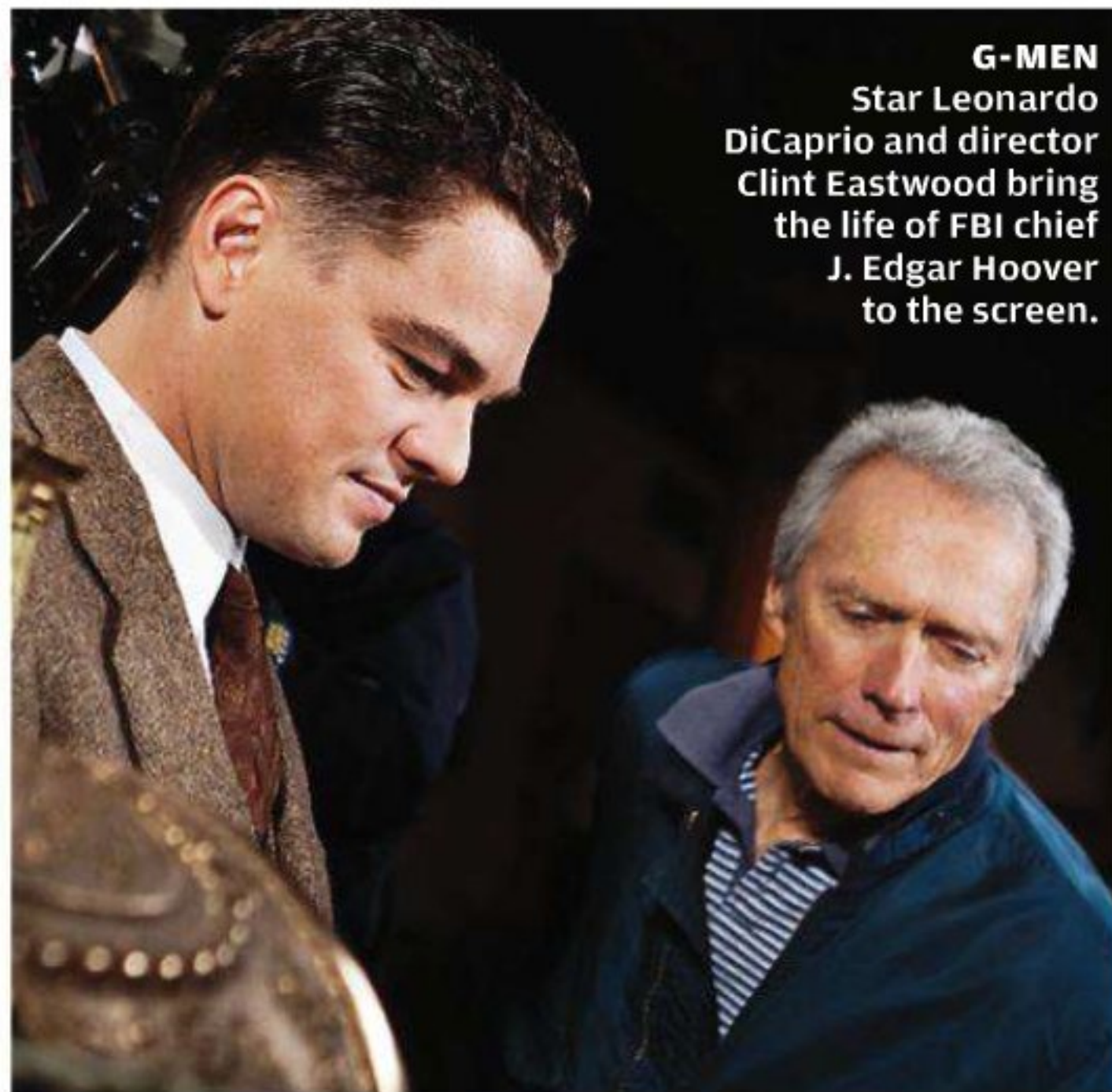
Directed by Clint Eastwood

SAY THIS FOR LEONARDO DICAPRIO: He doesn't scare off easy from acting challenges. At 37, he's already played billionaire Howard Hughes (*The Aviator*), junkie Jim Carroll (*The Basketball Diaries*), great imposter Frank Abagnale Jr. (*Catch Me If You Can*) and Shakespeare's Romeo. In *J. Edgar*, DiCaprio ages from his twenties to his seventies to play America's feared and loathed top cop. And despite being buried in layers of (often too obvious) prosthetic latex, DiCaprio is a roaring wonder in the role. He needs to be. Until his death in 1972, J. Edgar Hoover ruled the Federal Bureau of Investigation like a bulldog no one would dare leash. That includes eight presidents, Martin Luther King Jr. and even Marilyn Monroe. For half a century Hoover nosed into private lives to control his enemies, and some friends. But Hoover had secrets too, and now acclaimed director Clint Eastwood, 81, and Oscar-winning *Milk* screenwriter Dustin Lance Black, 37, are doing the nosing around.

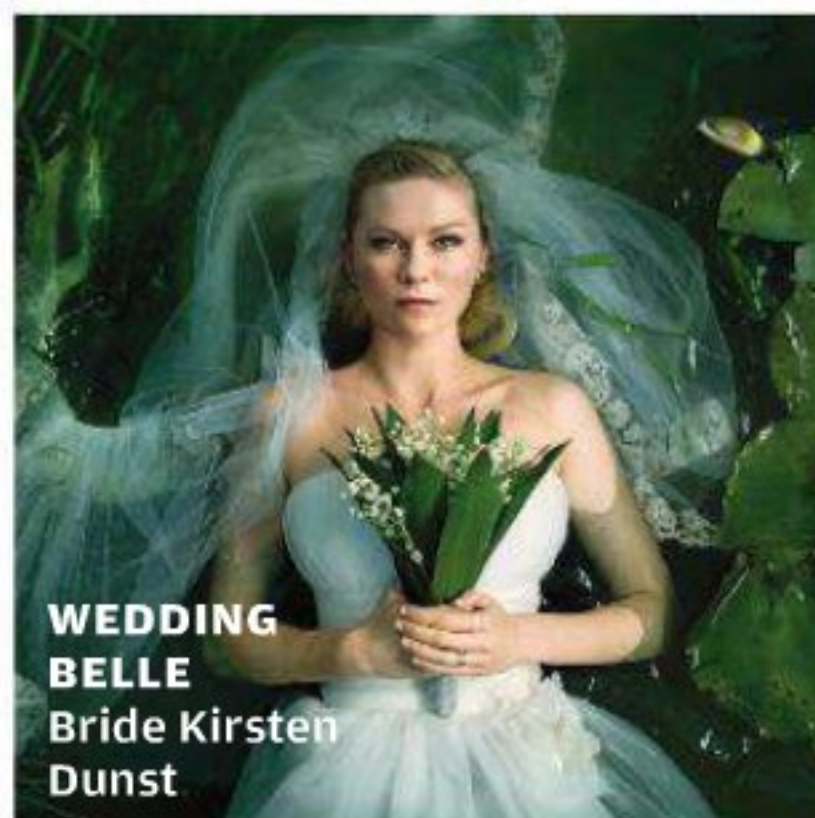
The result is a movie exhilarated by biting off more than it can chew, a great boon especially when the pacing goes from rushed to dramatically inert. The tabloid version of Hoover as a cross-dressing closet queen is addressed, but not exploited. Black's script isn't linear; it jumps back and forth in time with impressionistic glee, hoping to get a fix on an unknowable public figure.

The film focuses on those closest to J. Edgar: his autocratic mother, Annie Hoover (a splendid Judi Dench); his protective secretary, Helen Gandy (a sutured Naomi Watts); and FBI associate director Clyde Tolson (a live-wire Armie Hammer), the lawyer who became J. Edgar's constant companion.

Of course, Hoover's greatest obsession was America and his need to protect it from commies and radicals. In dark and weighted images, Eastwood charts Hoover's rise and all-consuming myth-building. Though Hoover did popular-



G-MEN
Star Leonardo DiCaprio and director Clint Eastwood bring the life of FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover to the screen.



WEDDING BELLE
Bride Kirsten Dunst

Melancholia

★★★ 1/2

Kirsten Dunst, Alexander Skarsgård

Directed by Lars von Trier

AT THIS POINT, DANISH director Lars von Trier's latest cinematic provocation has been unfortunately overshadowed by his comments when *Melancholia* debuted at the

Cannes Film Festival in May: "What can I say? I understand Hitler, but I think he did some wrong things, yes, absolutely. He's not what you would call a good guy, but I understand much about him, and I sympathize with him a little bit."

Stupid? Misguided? A bad joke? Probably all of the above. That's von Trier – from *Breaking the Waves* to *Antichrist*, he delights in stirring things up. Are his remarks the end of the world? It's your call. But the end of the world is surely coming in *Melancholia*, a potent beauty of a film. As Justine (Kirsten Dunst) prepares for her wedding at a mansion owned by her sister Claire (a superb Charlotte Gainsbourg) and her know-it-all husband, John (Kiefer Sutherland), the planet Melancholia is on a crash course with Earth. Von Trier opens with a surreal hint of things to come, set to Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde," in which Justine – in her bridal gown – seems to sleepwalk through images of brutal de-

struction. It's then that the director reverts to Justine's wedding to Michael (Alexander Skarsgård), her battles with her bickering, divorced parents, expertly played by John Hurt and Charlotte Rampling, and the palpable tension between Justine and Claire.

The luminous Dunst deservedly won the Best Actress prize at Cannes. Her incomparable performance, a slow accumulation of moods from despair to euphoria, never strikes a false note. In the film's final section, a few weeks after the wedding, Claire dominates the proceedings as Justine gives in to depression. It's here that Gainsbourg shatters Claire's careful mask of calm to show the raging insecurities beneath, prompted by concern for her young son and her husband's pompous insistence that disaster will be averted. Von Trier draws us inexorably into the web of these characters. He loses us in a dream of his own devising. That's filmmaking. Now if he'd only learn to shut up at press conferences.

Tower Heist

★★★ 1/2

Ben Stiller, Eddie Murphy

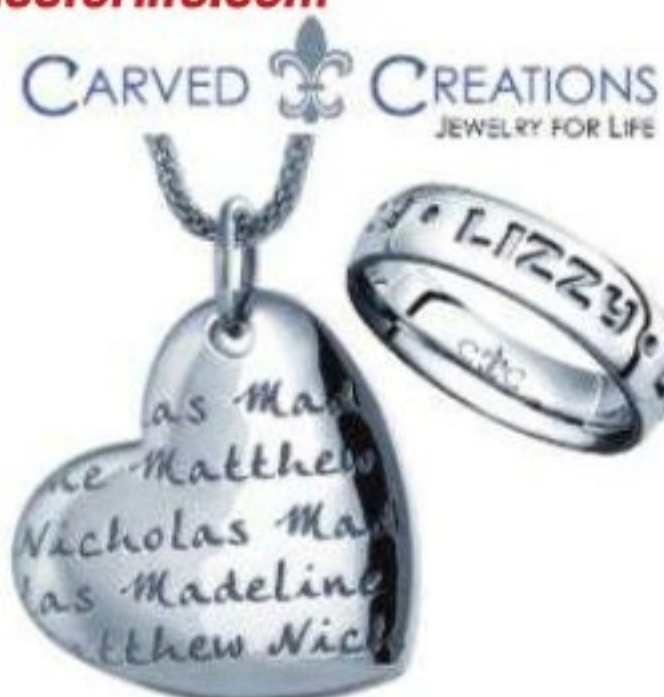
Directed by Brett Ratner

THERE'S NOT MUCH TO SAY about a jerry-built caper comedy, except that this one has timeliness on its side, and some first-rate clowns. The employees at a gilded Manhattan apartment complex, led by manager Ben Stiller, decide to rob the ass of a Madoff-like billionaire in the penthouse (a supremely slimy Alan Alda). Why? He's bilked them out of their pensions. Stiller recruits a bankrupt resident (Matthew Broderick) and a bellhop (Michael Peña). But the friskiest conspirator is Slide (Eddie Murphy), a thief with his own agenda. Stiller is the Man when you want to add soul to silliness. And it's great to see Murphy dump the *Dr. Dolittle* drool and play street again. Director Brett Ratner doesn't exactly tie up loose ends; the whole movie is loose ends. But it's a kick to watch a Ponzi-schemer get his. You won't remember *Tower Heist* an hour later, but the top cast makes the jokes (even the lousy ones) go down easy.

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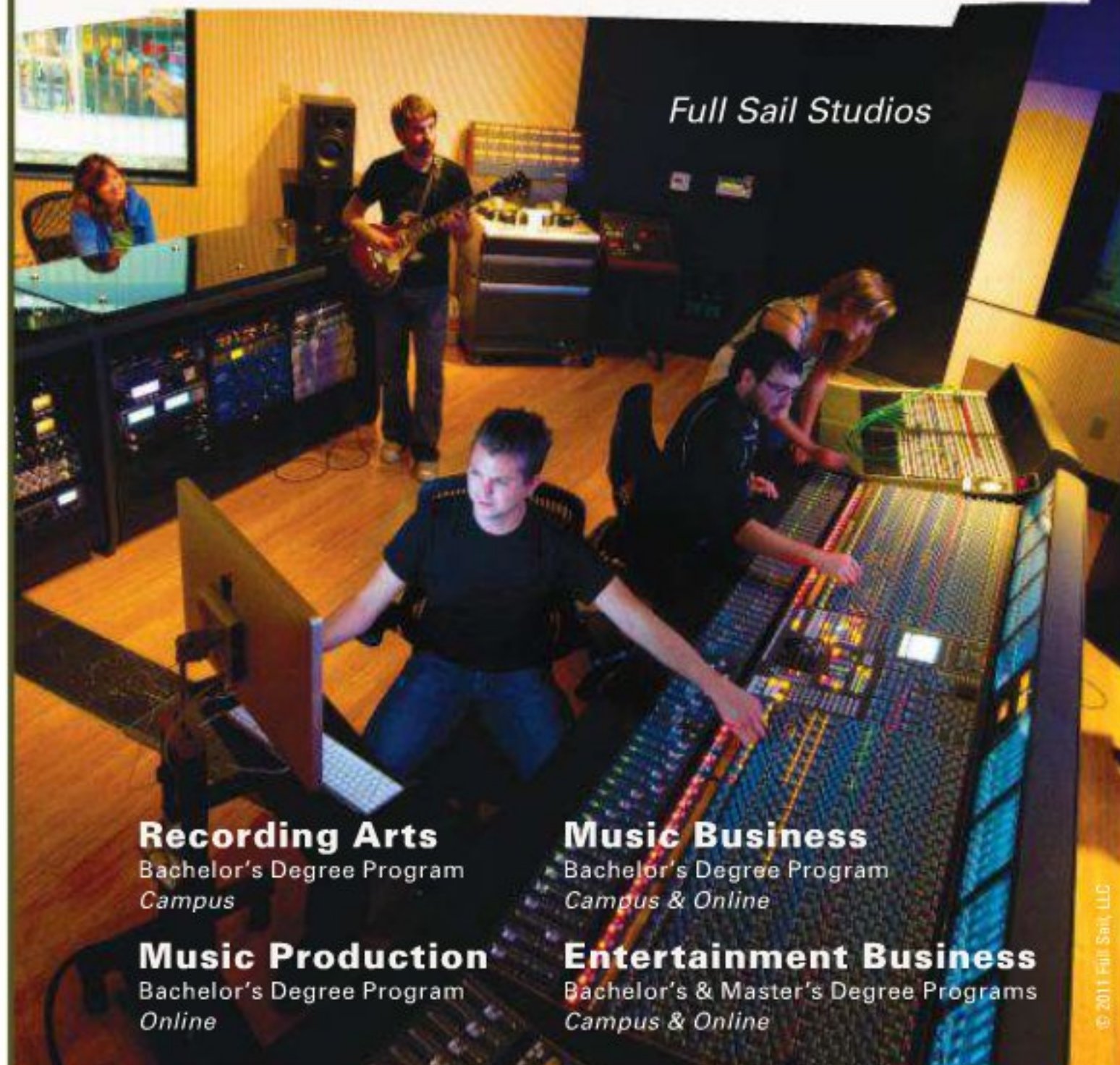
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CHARTS

iTunes TOP 10 SONGS

- Rihanna**
"We Found Love" SRP/Def Jam
- LMFAO**
"Sexy and I Know It" Party Rock/Will.I.am/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Drake**
"Make Me Proud" Cash Money/Young Money/Universal
- Adele**
"Someone Like You" XL/Columbia
- Justin Bieber**
"Mistletoe" Island Def Jam
- Foster the People**
"Pumped Up Kicks" StarTime/Columbia
- Maroon 5**
"Moves Like Jagger" A&M/Octone
- David Guetta**
"Without You" What a Music/Astralwerks/Capitol
- Gym Class Heroes**
"Stereo Hearts" Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen
- Coldplay**
"Paradise" Capitol

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COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- Wilco**
The Whole Love DMP/Anti-
- Dum Dum Girls**
Only in Dreams Sub Pop
- M83**
Hurry Up, We're Dreaming Mute
- Real Estate**
Days Domino
- Zola Jesus**
Conatus Sacred Bones
- Neon Indian**
Era Extraña Mom + Pop
- Deer Tick**
Divine Providence Partisan
- Youth Lagoon**
The Year of Hibernation Fat Possum
- St. Vincent**
Strange Mercy 4AD
- Twin Sister**
In Heaven Domino

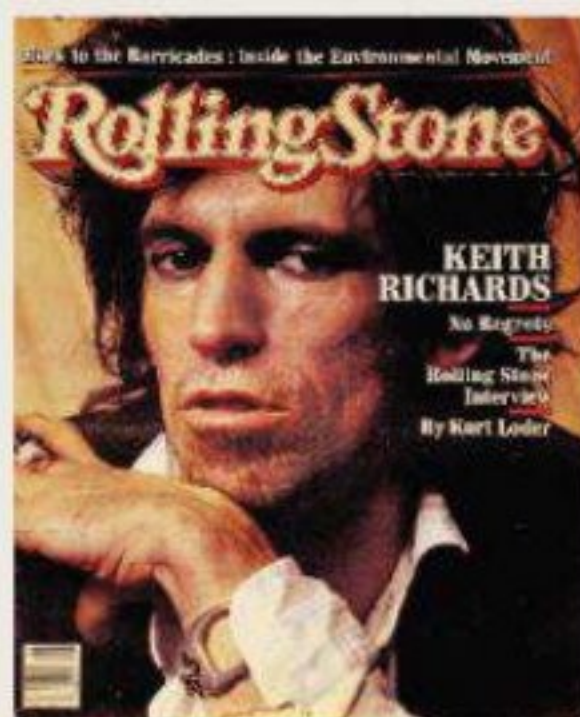
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From the Vault

RS 356, November 12th, 1981

TOP 10 SINGLES

- Daryl Hall and John Oates**
"Private Eyes" RCA
- The Rolling Stones**
"Start Me Up" Rolling Stones
- Olivia Newton-John**
"Physical" MCA
- Foreigner**
"Waiting for a Girl Like You" Atlantic
- Bob Seger**
"Tryin' to Live My Life Without You" Capitol
- Little River Band**
"The Night Owls" Capitol
- Air Supply**
"Here I Am (Just When I Thought I Was Over You)" Arista
- Rick Springfield**
"I've Done Everything for You" RCA
- Christopher Cross**
"Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" Warner
- Mike Post**
"The Theme From 'Hill Street Blues'" Elektra



On the Cover

"It's a true friendship when you can bash somebody over the head and not be told, 'You're not my friend anymore.' [Mick and I] put up with each other's bitching. People have these arguments and say, 'Will they split up?' But it's our way of working, you know? He's my wife." —Keith Richards

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Top 40 Albums

- Coldplay**
Mylo Xyloto Capitol
- Kelly Clarkson**
Stronger 19
- Michael Bublé**
Christmas 143/Reprise
- Adele**
21 XL/Columbia
- Toby Keith**
Clancy's Tavern Show Dog-Universal
- Tom Waits**
Bad as Me Anti-
- Scotty McCreery**
Clear as Day 19/Mercury Nashville
- Lady Antebellum**
Own the Night Capitol Nashville
- Tony Bennett**
Duets II RPM/Columbia
- Casting Crowns**
Come to the Well Beach Street/Reunion
- Lil Wayne**
Tha Carter IV Young Money/Cash Money
- She & Him**
A Very She & Him Christmas Merge
- Evanescence**
Evanescence Wind-Up
- Vince Gill**
Guitar Slinger MCA Nashville
- Foster the People**
Torches StarTime/Columbia
- J. Cole**
Cole World: The Sideline Story Roc-A-Fella/Roc Nation/Def Jam
- Kaskade**
Fire & Ice Ultra Digital EX
- NOW 39**
Various Artists Universal/EMI/Sony Music
- Jay-Z and Kanye West**
Watch the Throne Roc-a-Fella/Roc Nation/Def Jam
- Boyz II Men**
Twenty Benchmark Entertainment
- Jason Aldean**
My Kinda Party Broken Bow
- Five Finger Death Punch**
American Capitalist Prospect Park
- Yo-Yo Ma, Stuart Duncan, Edgar Meyer and Chris Thile**
The Goat Rodeo Sessions Sony Classical
- Lauren Alaina**
Wildflower 19/Mercury Nashville
- LMFAO**
Sorry for Party Rocking Party Rock/Will.I.am/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Luke Bryan**
Tailgates & Tanlines Capitol Nashville
- Mumford & Sons**
Sigh No More Glassnote
- Beyoncé**
4 Parkwood/Columbia
- Footloose**
Soundtrack Atlantic (Nashville)
- Adele**
19 XL/Columbia
- Martina McBride**
Eleven Republic Nashville
- Casey Donahew Band**
Double-Wide Dream Almost Country
- Brantley Gilbert**
Halfway to Heaven Valory
- Maroon 5**
Hands All Over A&M/Octone
- Joe**
The Good, the Bad, the Sexy 563
- Lady Gaga**
Born This Way Streamline/KonLive/Interscope
- Justice**
Audio, Video, Disco Ed Banger/Vice/Because
- George Strait**
Here for a Good Time MCA Nashville
- Chris Isaak**
Beyond the Sun Wicked Game/Vanguard
- Eric Church**
Chief EMI Nashville



Coldplay Heat Up

Even without a radio smash, Coldplay's fifth disc is one of the year's biggest. It sold 447,000 copies - the best opening week for a rock LP in 2011.



Kelly Gets Stronger

Clarkson's Top 10 single "Mr. Know It All" helped her fifth LP, *Stronger* - which ranges through pop, R&B and country - move 163,000 copies.



Worth the Waits

Waits' first studio album in seven years moved a solid 63,000 copies - the singer's best week since SoundScan began tracking record sales in 1991.



Dance Revolution

Top DJ and Deadmau5 buddy Kaskadee's seventh album - a double LP featuring tracks with Neon Trees and Skylar Grey - sold 20,000 copies.

00 Chart position on Nov. 2nd, 2011
00 Chart position on Oct. 26th, 2011
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2ND Re-Entry
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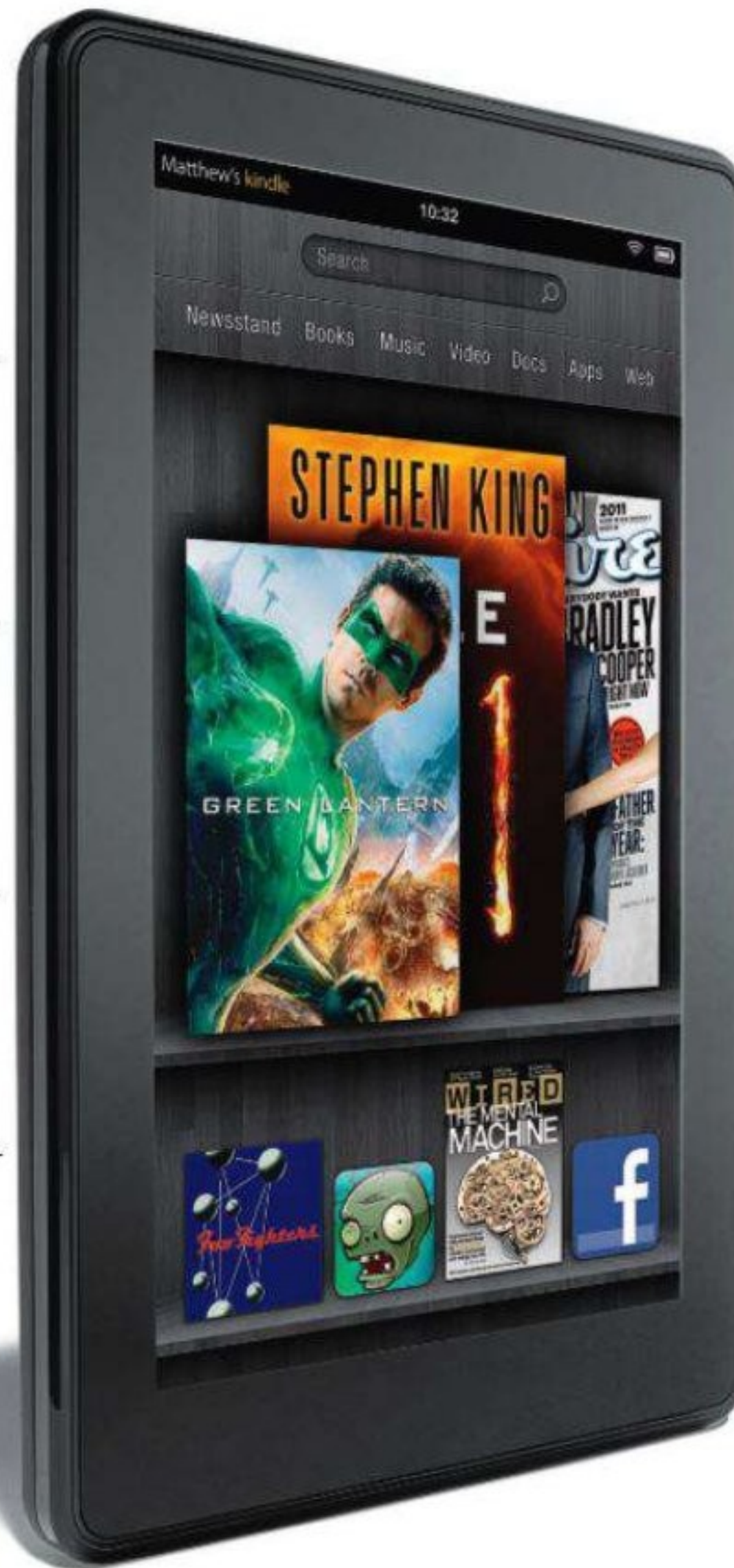
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